Beniamin Whichcote S. S. T. Professor

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SEVERAL DISCOURSES:

CONCERNING

The Moral Part of Religion Reinforced by Chriſtianity.
The Reconciliation of Sinners by the Death of Chriſt.
The Mediation of Chriſt, the Grand Inſtitution of God.
The Arguments by which Men ſhould be perſuaded to Reconcile unto God.
The Eſſence of Religion, a Diſpoſition for God.
The Decency of Life recommended by Religion.
The Glorious Evidence and Power of Divine Truth.
The Venerable Nature, and Tranſcendant Benefit of the Chriſtian Religion.
The Abſolute Neceſſity of Religious Obedience, and unavoidable Perdition of the Diſobedient.
The Illuſtrious Manifeſtations of God, and the Inexcuſable Ignorance of Men.
The Unnatural Ingratitude of the Profane and Irreligious.
The Miſerable Degeneracy of Men through their Affectation of Atheiſm, and Practice of Wickedneſs.
The Direful Vengeance which falls upon the Souls of Incorrigible Sinners.
That thoſe who are truly Religious, will be delivered from all dangerous Errors about Religion.
That the Unity of the Church is carefully maintained by all thoſe who are ſincere Chriſtians.

[*The Two laſt of which Diſcourſes are a Continuation of Sermon* VIII. Vol. II.]

By the Reverend and Learned
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DIS-

DISCOURSE I.

The Moral Part of Religion reinforced by Christianity.

TIT. II, 12.

For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; Teaching us, that denying Ungodliness, and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World.

Soberly, *Righteously*, and *Godly*: These three are the chief heads of *Morality*; they are Terms that are known in the World; and they have been universally acknowledged in all Ages. I say, all the Instances of Morality are Comprehended in these three: *Sobriety*, which terminates it self in every Man's Person: *Righteousness*, which requires all Duties which belongs to a Man's Neighbour: And *Piety*, that terminates it self upon God. So that by this you may Understand, that there is no prejudice at all done to Religion, to talk of God's Creation; of the Reinforcing the Principles thereof; or the use of Reason in the matters of Religion. For you see the Apostle doth joyn them together. The *Grace of God*, or the Grace of the Gospel, is that which doth Recover us: Whatsoever is of Foundation in the Creation of God; whatsoever any Man is bound to by any Principle of Reason; the same is Remstated and further settled by the Grace of

Vol. III. the Goſpel. [*The Grace of God which brings Salvation.* Concerning *Grace* there is a World of Diſtinctions which are to be found in the Schoolmen. But I will only name thoſe that are of the greateſt uſe: Amongſt which this is a famous one, *Gratia gratum faciens*: that is of great uſe to underſtand. The Grace of God, *i. e.* the Favour and Good-will of God, whereby of his own Goodneſs, He makes a Creature acceptable unto himſelf. And the truth is, that is the moſt famous Inſtance of the Grace of God in Scripture; and it is a thing that is Terminated in God; and He is the Subject of it, and we are only the Objects. But then there is *Gratia gratis data*: Grace that is freely given of God: Now that is the *Effect* of the former, and we are the Subjects of it. The ſelf-ſame thing that is in us call'd *Virtue*; as it refers to God, is *Grace*. I ſay, *that which is in the Subject Virtue; in reſpect of God, as the Author of it, is Grace.*

Χάρις. In the next Place they are wont to diſtinguiſh between Grace that doth *Sanctifie*, and that Grace that doth *Edifie*; the parts of Men, their great Gifts: Such as *Judas* might have, or ſome falſe Prophet; and we find an ill account of ſome that had theſe Gifts in the primitive times. And then there is Grace that *Sanctifies* the Subject, that becomes an inherent good diſpoſition. But in this Text, I underſtand, by the *Grace of God*, another thing, *viz.* the *Doctrine of the Goſpel*; the Subject matter of the Goſpel. Now that ye may be ſatisfied, that I give you a right ſenſe of the Text, I will ſhew you, by many other Texts of Scripture, that this is frequently underſtood. *So the Law was given by* Moſes, *but Grace and Truth came by* Jeſus Chriſt, *i. e.* the former Diſpenſation by *Moſes*; the latter Diſpenſation, which we call the Goſpel, Grace and Truth, becauſe it was that which the former

Χάρισμα.

Joh 1. 17.

mer aimed at, and of which the former was but a Shadow, this the Substance. How comes it to pass that *ye were so soon removed from the Grace of* Christ, *unto another Gospel?* From the Grace of *Christ*, *i. e.* from the Doctrine of the Gospel. Again, it is said, *he persuaded them to continue in the Grace of God*, that is in the Doctrine of the Gospel. *God gave Testimony to the Word of his Grace by Signs and Wonders*, *i. e.* the Doctrine of the Gospel was confirmed by those extraordinary Gifts which abounded in the primitive times. So, *we believe that through the Grace of our Lord* Jesus Christ *we shall be saved even as they*, *i. e.* we of the Gentile Church that never receiv'd Circumcision, had never any thing to do with the Mosaical Institution, have hope through the Grace of the Gospel to be saved as well as the *Jews*. *Te have also Grace and Apostleship*, *i. e.* Authority and Power to publish and declare the Doctrine of the Gospel. *We are not under the Law, but under Grace*, *i. e.* not under *Mosaical* Dispensation, but under the Manifestation of God by *Christ*. *I exhort you not to receive the Grace of God in vain*, *i. e.* have not the Knowledge of the Gospel without Effect. *I do not frustrate the Grace of God; for if Righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain.* So, *to the Praise and Glory of his Grace, whereby he hath made us acceptable. That in the Ages to come he might shew the exceeding Riches of his Grace*, *i. e.* make a solemn full Declaration of the Gospel. So, *since the Day that ye knew of the Grace of God*, *i. e.* since the Gospel hath been declared to you. *He hath given us good Hope through Grace*, *i. e.* according to the tenure of the Doctrine of the Gospel. *Be strong in Grace*, *that is*, *in the Lord* Jesus Christ. So, *lest any of you fail of the Grace of God. Who have Prophesied of the Grace, that should come unto you*, *i. e.* of the Declaration of God in the Gospel. *Turning the Grace of God*

Disc. I.

Gal. 1. 6.
Act. 13. 43.
Act. 11. 23.
Act. 14. 3.
Act. 15. 11.
Act. 20. 32.
Rom. 1. 5.
Rom. 6. 14.
2 Cor. 6. 1.
Gal. 2. 21.
Eph. 1. 6.
Eph. 2. 7.
Col. 1. 6.
2 Th. 2. 16.
2 Tim. 2. 1.
Heb. 12. 15.
1 Pet. 1. 10.
1 Pet. 5. 12.

Vol. III. *God into Wantonneſs*, *i. e.* expounding the Doctrine of the Goſpel into a Principle of Licentiouſneſs and Wantonneſs. I have quoted all theſe Paſſages for two Reaſons. 1. To aſſure you of the right *Interpretation* of the Text, that the Goſpel is frequently called the *Grace of God*. 2. To ſhew you the *Miſtake* of Men, who having fail'd of this Notion, have ſpoken of ſuch Scriptures as I have now quoted, in a confuſed and unintelligible manner. And when a Man hath heard them ſpeak of the *Grace of God*, there was nothing, that his Underſtanding could faſten upon; and ſo the Words go up into the Air and vaniſh as a ſound, and the Hearers are never the better. And why any ſhould ſtick at this Interpretation, I ſee no Reaſon; for, the Effect is put for the Cauſe; the Name of the Principle beſtowed upon the Product; that is called the *Grace of God* which is the product or effect of it. The matter of the Goſpel is the happy product of the Grace and Goodneſs of God towards Men: And in this ſenſe it is called the *Power of God*, and the *Manifold Wiſdom of God*: the great Wiſdom and Goodneſs of God is declared in thoſe Terms which God purpoſes in the way of the Goſpel to Sinners, upon which he will receive Sinners to Grace and Favour.

Jud. 4.

Πολυποικίλος σοφία. Eph. 3. 10.

So much for the Explication of the firſt Term, [*the Grace of God*;] the next is [*which bringeth Salvation*;] in the Greek [*which is ſaving*;] the Intention of the Grace of God is Salvation to Men; and Salvation is in the way of the Doctrine of the Goſpel, which is now the only ſettled and eſtabliſhed way. We have two Apoſtles that do ſeemingly Differ in this point, yet do very well agree; St. *Paul* in his Epiſtles to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and St. *James*, about Juſtification. This is that which St. *Paul* aims at; Not *Moſes*, but *Chriſt*; now,

Ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.

now, not the way of the Moſaical Diſpenſation, but the Manifeſtation of God in Chriſt; St. *James* doth not at all oppoſe this. That is an admirable Gloſs of *Eraſmus*: the Moſaical Diſpenſation, becauſe it did Adumbrage Chriſt in Types and Shadows, therefore in Gods intention it was ſet up for a while, till the Sun of Righteouſneſs ſhould ariſe; and when the Sun of Righteouſneſs did ariſe, all Shadows gave place; and Truth appear'd; the Images, and Repreſentations, and Shadows of Truth they did vaniſh away; that Chriſt, who is the Truth did ariſe, and the Moſaical Diſpenſation was abrogated. But thus I Reconcile the two Apoſtles St. *Paul* and St. *James*. Both of them agree in this; that we are Juſtified in the way in which *Abraham* was Juſtified. Now *Abraham's* Faith was accompanied with Obedience, and *Abraham* was juſtified before the Moſaical Diſpenſation: So ſaith St. *Paul*, *Abraham was juſtified, being yet uncircumciſed.* Now, Circumciſion being a famous part of the Moſaical Diſpenſation, it is, by a Metonymy, put for the whole Diſpenſation. Yet *Abraham* was juſtified by Obedience. So that they both agree. We are not juſtified by the Works of the Moſaical Law, or by the Moſaical Inſtitution; but we are to be Juſtified by a Faith that is operative, and not a dead Faith: So St. *James*. *Abraham* was juſtified not being Circumciſed: So St. *Paul*. Diſc. I.

Lex Moſis quoniam Typis & Ceremoniis Chriſtum adumbrabat, ad tempus aliquod tantum data eſt donec adoriente Sole cederent Umbræ, & apparentibus veris faceſſerent verorum Imagines. Eraſmus. *Poſtquam Chriſtus ei Veritas eſt, Exortus eſt, abrogata eſt tota Moſis Lex, quod ad literam attinet.* Eraſm.

[*The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation, teaching us to deny Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts.*] *Worldly Luſts* are diſtinguiſhed into three Heads: Conceitedneſs, Coveteouſneſs, and Senſuality. And this I have from St. *John*, who Divides and Diſtinguiſheth all that is in the World, as degenerate, and Apoſtate from God, into the *Luſts of the Fleſh*, *the Luſt of the Eyes*, *and the Pride of Life*: And there is nothing in this World, but may be referred to one of theſe three. But here in the

Κοσμικαὶ ἐπιθυμίαι. 1 Joh. 2. 20.

Text it is contradiſtinguiſhed; *Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts.* Now in this Diſtinction of *Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts*, you muſt thus Underſtand it; *Ungodlineſs* refers to God immediately; and ſo doth comprehend Atheiſm and Profaneneſs; groſs Contempt and Neglect of God; Infidelity and Diſaffection towards Him, and Rebellion againſt Him. Then he ſaith the ſame things in the Affirmative, but [*Teaching us to live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly.*]

Σωφρόνως. 1*ſt.* For the Word *Soberly.*] Sobriety Terminates in our ſelves. Religion begins at home; its firſt Operation is upon our Affections; he that governs not himſelf, is not capable to do his Duty to God, or Man. If a Man be not brought to Sobriety, it is a vain thing to attempt to make him Righteous, or Pious: for all Reformation begins at home. You muſt firſt mend the Perſon, and Quality of the Subject, otherwiſe he will never be fit for uſe. He that doth not Govern himſelf, he is not in a Capacity to Honour God, or to do Right to Men; that is the firſt.

Δικαίως. 2*d. Righteouſly.*] And here I take up St. *John's* Argument, and I will alter it a little, *How can a Man ſay that he Loves God, whom he hath not ſeen; if he Loves not his Brother whom he hath ſeen?* So, by a parity of Reaſon, I argue, can a Man ſay that he performs his Duty to *God*, whom he hath not ſeen, which is Piety; when as he hath not performed his Duty to *Men*, with whom he doth Converſe. If ſo be a Man be *Unrighteous* towards his Neighbour, his Fellow-Creature, his Fellow-Subject, one that bears the Image of God; if he fails in common Duty, there is no likelihood that he will perform his Duty to God; neither is he in a diſpoſition to do it.

1 Joh. 4. 20.

Εὐσεβῶς. 3*d. Godly.*] That reſpects God himſelf, who is the primary and moſt excellent Object, to whom none

of

of us will be able to make an Approach, till we firſt be brought to Sobriety, and Temperance, and make right Proof of our ſelves, by right Carriage towards our Fellow-Creatures. Diſc. I.

This for the *Order of the Words*. In the next place for the *Things themſelves*. It is a good Gloſs that the Schools give upon the Word *Soberly*. It is Soveraign to a Man's *Mind*: For Sobriety doth refer in part to the Mind, and in part to the Body. As it refers to the Mind, it is that which we call *Modeſty* and *Humility*: and as it refers to the Body, it is that which we call *Temperance*. Σωφροσύνη quaſi σώζουσα τὴν φρένα.

Firſt, Sobriety as it refers to the *Mind*, and ſo 'tis called *Modeſty* or *Humility*; we ought *not to think of our ſelves above what is meet, but to think Soberly*. The *ſame Mind is to be in us, that was in Chriſt Jeſus, who put himſelf into the form of a Servant*. He *was meek and lowly in Heart*. So ought we to be. The Oppoſites to this are, Haughtineſs, Arrogance, Inſolence, Affectation of Arbitrarineſs, Independance, Aſſuming Authority, Affecting to be Lawleſs, to Controul Men, to Cenſure, State and Determine according to Pleaſure; which is the higheſt Extravagance and Exorbitance imaginable, becauſe it is unbecoming a finite and fallible Creature in his beſt State, much more in his Lapſed and Degenerate State and Condition. This is that which is conjoyned with Turbulence and Diſturbance of the World, the Violation of Peace, and Order; and the confuſion and unſettling of the publick Peace. Rom. 12. 3. Phil. 2. 5. Matt. 11. 29.

It is the higheſt Depravation of the Nobleſt Part of Man, his Mind and Underſtanding; and therefore 'tis the greater Deformity, by how much more the Excellency of Mind and Underſtanding is above this Body.

None do ſo much expoſe themſelves to God's Contradiction, as thoſe that do Arrogate and Aſ-

Vol. III.

ſume: For that *God who giveth Grace to the Humble, doth reject the Proud.* Now the Cure of theſe is (as Jam. 4. 6. Phyſicians uſe to ſay, *Contraria contrariis curantur*) a Man muſt charge this upon himſelf, To deſire, to will, to do *ſecundum rei rationem*, according to the Reaſon of the thing; and he is not a well-governed Man, and one that hath in himſelf the Spirit of a Chriſtian, that hath not ſo far conſider'd, as to lay this Law upon himſelf, to Deſire nothing, to Will nothing, to Do nothing but that which is Warranted by the Reaſon of the Thing. But how little place this hath in the Lives of Men, Experience abundantly teſtifies. For if theſe were the Rules of Mens Action, there would be no Contentions between Man and Man. To give an Account of all that we are, and Think and Do, and Engage in, and ſee that it be according to the Law of God, that is grounded on the Reaſon of the Thing, that it be fit and Juſt; that is, fair and Equal; this we are to conſider. It is our Wiſdom to diſcern, and our Righteouſneſs to comply with it. Tell me of a Chriſtian that fails in theſe, and I will tell you he is ſo far ſhort of doing like a Chriſtian, that he is not acknowledged to be within the degree of a Rational Agent: He is not a Man, therefore he cannot be a Chriſtian; he doth not act according to the Principles of Nature, therefore he doth fail of being a Chriſtian: Not to do, becauſe 'tis his Will, becauſe he hath a Mind, becauſe 'tis his Pleaſure; but to do, becauſe 'tis Worthy, becauſe 'tis Fit, becauſe 'tis Noble and Generous; it is Comely in it ſelf, and grateful to God. Now ſuch a Man he walks *ſteadily* and *ſafely*.

Τὸ καλὸν. Τὸ δίκαιον. Τὸ ἴσον. Τὸ πρεπῶδες.

1. He walks *ſteadily*. For he is Uniform, very Self-conſiſtent; he doth never contradict himſelf. Whereas, we ſee, he that is not always in the way of Truth, hath great uſe of a *good Memory*; for if he

Oportet mendacem eſſe memorem.

he Forget himſelf, he Betrays himſelf; but he that is always in the way of Truth, though he forget himſelf; yet if he Move, he Walks uniformly.

2. He walks *ſafely*. For Truth will finally prevail and find place. 'Tis an Obſervation that we have had for nigh ſix thouſand Years, Force and Violence may take place for a while; Things may be driven out of their Courſe; Wickedneſs may take place and prevail for a time; Things that are unnatural, that are Upſtarts, contrary to the Rules of God's Creation, may, I ſay, be applauded for a while: But thoſe things will fail, and Truth will prevail: Falſhood and Lies are good for a Shift; but if the thing take not effect in an Hour, the Undertaking is marred.

Res nolunt diu male adminiſtrari. In naturam ſuam redeant quibus Veritas non ſubeſt.

Secondly, As it refers to the *Body*, ſo I call Sobriety *Temperance*, and Moderate Uſe of our ſelves, and things. And now I am upon an Argument that admits ten thouſand Caſes of Conſcience, if I ſhould deſcend to Particulars. But I ſhall reduce them all to *three Rules*: And if I bring but Men to theſe three, Temperance will have great place in the World.

1. The *firſt Rule* for Limitation and Reſtriction is this; in Eating and Drinking, and the Uſe of all Senſual Pleaſures, take care there be nothing that is againſt the *Health* and *Strength* of the Body.

2. Nothing to *Indiſpoſe* the Body, as it is the *Soul's Manſion* or Inſtrument.

3. Nothing *Diſhonourable* to an Intelligent Agent.

1. Nothing to ſuch a degree as may Deſtroy either the *Health* or *Strength* of a Man's Body. The End of Eating and Drinking, and things of that Nature, is to Maintain Life, Health, and Strength. Now all Men acknowledge, that no Means is to diſſerve the End: For this is an Univerſal Rule, the Means have Place, Order, Meaſure,

Οἴνῳ συγκεραυνωθέντες φρένα. *Vino mentem attoniti.*

Media ordinem modum menſuramamabilitatem ſumunt à Fine.

ſure, Manner, and all Determination with reſpect to the End. Now if Eating and Drinking be the Means for continuance of Life, for the Preſervation of Health and Strength, then muſt you not, by the uſe of Means, incommode the End; but advance and procure it.

2. Nothing to *Indiſpoſe* the Body, as it is the *Soul's Manſion-Houſe*, or *Inſtrument*. For the Body is both the Soul's place of Habitation; and the Organs that are in the Body, are the Soul's Inſtruments: For the Houſe is fitted to the Inhabitant, and not the Inhabitant to the Houſe. And the Rule is, that the Vertue and Goodneſs of any Inſtrument lies in its fitneſs for Uſe. And this is the great rarity of the *Body*, that it is the place of the Soul's Reſidence, the Soul's Manſion, the Soul's Inſtrument; therefore do nothing againſt it.

Inſtrumenti vis, virtus conſiſtit in uſu. Domicilium, Organum Animæ.

3. Nothing *Diſhonourable* to an Intelligent Agent: For this is our Natural Perfection. In reſpect of our Intelligence, Mind and Underſtanding, we naturally bear the Image of God; and in reſpect of theſe, we are ſaid to be made after the Image of God in the Moment of our Creation. Now all will grant, that 'tis Unworthy to ſink our ſelves below our Species: So we muſt not Diſhonour our ſelves as we are Intelligent Agents.

Wherefore, to comply with theſe *three Rules*, we muſt obſerve Meaſure and Reaſon in Eating, and Drinking, and Sleeping, and all other ſorts of Senſual Pleaſure. For all ſorts of bodily Delights and Pleaſures, the great commendation of them, which make them fit our Turns, is rare and moderate Uſe of them. Therefore let that which we call Surfeiting, and Drunkenneſs and Senſuality, as they are miſchievous to our Bodies, ſo let them be infamous; and as a Man loves himſelf, let him avoid them. And to *Perſwade* you to this, let me offer theſe Suggeſtions.

Voluptates commendat rarior uſus.

1. I

1. If a Man do *Wrong* to *Himſelf*, I would aſk him, to whom he would do right? For he ſins againſt his Life, he ſhortens his Days, and he parts with his Health and Strength. Intemperance lays up Matter for Diſeaſes in our Bodies, and doth diſable a Man's Nature, and ſhorten his Days, and doth propagate to Poſterity *Mala ſtamina vitæ*, evil Principles of Life, that their Off-ſpring are either ſhort-liv'd, or never are well, becauſe their Parents have abuſed their Bodies. And how ſad a thing is it, when a Man ſhould look to Die in peace, that when he comes to caſt up his Accounts, he ſhall breath out ſuch Sayings as theſe, "Whereas I am now Sick, I might have been Well; whereas now I muſt Die, I might have Lived many Years longer; whereas I now leave craſie and ſickly Children, they might have had better Conſtitutions, if I my ſelf had not ſpoiled them. What ſad Reflections will theſe things be, you that are ſkilled in Philoſophy and Phyſick will grant: But for others, I quote a place or two of Scripture. *Who hath Woes? who hath Sorrows? who hath Contentions? who hath Bablings? who hath Wounds without Cauſe? who hath Redneſs of Eyes? They that tarry long at the Wine, they that go to ſeek mixt Wine.* And ſo the Prophet, *Wo unto them that riſe up early in the Morning, that they may follow ſtrong Drink, that continue until Night, till Wine enflame them.* And therefore the Apoſtle adviſes, *Be not drunk with Wine, wherein is Exceſs.* Diſc. I. Prov. 23. 29. Iſa. 5. 11. Eph.

2d. *Suggeſtion.* I would admoniſh Men to take into conſideration the ſad *Conſequences* that follow upon Intemperance. For that I will give you two Inſtances in Scripture; One of a very Bad Man, and another of a very good Man. (1.) A very *Bad Man, Belſhazzar*, he carouſes in his Cups, and ſpends all Night in Drinking; and ſee what Dan. 5. 3, 4, 5, &c.

what followed: There is a *Hand-writing* appears against him, and makes him tremble, and a Doom is declared, and presently executed: For that very Night was he to be slain, when there was no Enemy that he dreaded. Now to supply the Text out of other History, *Darius* and *Cyrus*, the Unkle and Nephew, beleagred *Babylon*, and depended upon a Propheſie, that if *Euphrates* fail'd them not, they were ſecure: But they drained the River, and in the middle of the Night, found all Drunk, and deſtroyed them. (2.) An Inſtance of a very *Good Man*, *Noah*, a Preacher of Righteouſneſs; ſee what happened upon his Intemperance (though he had many Apologies to make for himſelf; as that he was the firſt Man that had the proof of the Spirit of Wine, who planted a Vineyard) yet ſee what followed upon it, things not to be ſpoken of.

Xenoph. Paidia, L. 7. & 8. Herodot. L. 1.

Gen. 9.12.

A 3*d*. *Suggeſtion* is this, That it *diſarms* a Man of his choice and beſt *Defence*, the *Reaſon* of a Man's Mind, his Underſtanding, his Prudence, his Principle of Self-Government; which is a great deal better for a Defence than Gunpowder or Shot; for thoſe are Nature's Proviſions, and the Wit and Reaſon of a Man prevails againſt the Strength of a Lion, the Cunning of a Fox; yea it will circumvent the Cunningneſs of all God's Creation. Now this *Exceſs* of Drinking doth Diſable a Man from the Uſe of Right Reaſon and Underſtanding, which is the greateſt Defence in the World: For by means of theſe, we may Defend our ſelves againſt all the wild Creatures of the Wilderneſs; yea againſt the Devils in Hell; for the Devil himſelf cannot prevail againſt me, unleſs I conſent. Now, I ſay, what a ſad thing is it, for a Cup that is more than fit, a Man ſhould Diſarm himſelf, and become a Prey to the Devil.

4. It doth exclude a Man from *Happineſs* in the World to come. Conſider that place, a dreadful place

place againſt Drunkards; *For while they be folden together as Thorns, and while they are Drunken as Drunkards, they ſhall be devoured as Stubble full dry:* And that Text where the Apoſtle reckons up the horrid Apoſtacy from the Principles of God's Creation, and puts *Drunkards* in among thoſe that are uncapable of enjoying the Heavenly Kingdom. *Nor Thieves, nor Coveteous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners ſhall inherit the Kingdom of God.* Now why is Drunkenneſs in ſuch a Conjunction? It is as bad as any; for no Man that is diſtempered by Wine can ſecure himſelf from any of the other. Diſc. I. Nahum. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 6. 10.

II. Duty is *Juſtly*; and this doth contain in it two things, or at leaſt two Names; that which we call *Juſtice*, and that which we call *Equity*. Sometimes they are conjoyn'd, ſometimes they are diſtinguiſhed. And this you may take for granted, *Juſt* doth always veil to Equal; *Equity* doth over-rule Juſtice, if there be Equity in the caſe. He that pretends to be Juſt, if he do not obſerve the Rules of Equity, wherein he pretends to be legally Juſt; he is Unjuſt. For ſtrict Juſtice doth Satisfie it ſelf in the obſervance of Common Uſage and Practice, and the Cuſtoms of Men, which are either in purſuance of a Law, or do amount to the Credit and Repute of a Law: and Men who are not more than exactly Juſt, if they approve themſelves to common Uſage and Practice, they are ſatisfied and ſelf-juſtified. But he that doth *Equally*; he conſiders the Parties caſe, he doth weigh all contingent Circumſtances, and he doth give further Allowance where there is reaſon for it. As to Inſtance. Δικαίως.

1. In caſe of *Offence*: And,
2. In caſe of *Contracts* or Bargains.

1. In caſe of *Offence*. If the Offence commmitted was *Involuntary* againſt his Will; then he that

is

is Equal, will easily Over-look it. For an involuntary Offence, should rather be put off with a Smile, then be taken notice of. But if it were *Voluntary*, if the Party do afterwards Repent, and Deprecate and Condem himself in doing of it; then he that is Equal desists from seeking Revenge or further Satisfaction. And indeed why should not we do so? Since *God* Himself doth compassionate all compassionable cases.

2. In Bargains and *Contracts*. If the Party prove a great Loser, and be mightily damaged, whereas he is not at all Faulty, then he ought to be equally dealt withal. *Possibly for a just Man,* ᾽Αγαθός. *no Man will dare to die; yet for a good Man, some* Rom. 7. 7. *will even dare to die.* This is such an one, who if he have another at an advantage, will so fairly deal with him, so equally consider him, that he will not stand upon the extent of his Right; but he will abate so far as the Reason of the Case requires. And this is the meaning of St. *Paul's Good Man.* Now upon the Account of Justice there are six things due.

1. *Subjection* to our Superiors, or giving place to our Betters.

2. *Fairness* in Converse with our Equals.

3. *Tenderness* towards Inferiors.

4. *Compassion* towards Persons in Misery.

5. *Thankfulness* to our Benefactors.

6. *Uprightness* towards all.

In these six Particulars I comprehend all the Instances and Particulars of Justice.

1. *Subjection* to *Superiors*, or giving place to our Betters. This both God Himself, and the Reason of the thing requires; Subjection to the Higher Powers. The Reason of the Thing requires it; for the Governour, *He is the Minister of God for the publick Good.* If a Man do but consider the Weight of Government upon the Shoulders that

bear

bear it, he will see great Reason, that he should create the Governour as little Disturbance as may be. Disc. I.

2. *Fairness* in Converse with Equals. Every one is better for another. God made the second in order to the first. *It is not good for Man to be alone.* And *Solomon* in his Book of *Proverbs* saith, *Wo be to him that is alone, for if* harm come to him, if he take a *fall, no body is at hand to help him up.* But every Man's Friend is a Supplement to him: for we say, a Man's Brother is *another Self.* And then, Converse will be with delight, when every one carries it Fair; for it is grievous to any one to be Neglected or Despised. Wherefore nothing is more Due under Heaven, than that upon the account of Equality and Parity among Men, converse should be with all Fairness and just Respect. Eccl. 4. 9. 10. *Væ soli.*

3. *Tenderness* towards *Inferiors.* It is unmanly and ignoble, it is not at all generous, to trample upon them that are under. There is a special Regard to be had to him that will give a Man place; and he hath not the Spirit of a Gentleman that will Despise him that doth acknowledge him to be Better.

4. *Compassion* is due to Persons in *Misery.* To Necessity and Misery Clemency is due; and we ought to help *to bear the burthen.* This is as due as any thing in the World, To relieve, to pity, to compassionate any one in Misery. And it is an Act of Justice, and recommended to us by our Saviour in the Parable of the Good *Samaritan.*

5. *Thankfulness* towards *Benefactors.* A Benefactor is to be a Representative of God: He that doth Gratifie me, he that doth supply me, and help me, is God's Messenger; and I am so to entertain him, so to value him, as one that doth remarkably Represent God, and bear his Image. Ingratitude is the worst temper: If you say a Man is ungrateful, you *Ingratum si dixeris omnia dixeris.*

you repreſent him as the worſt Creature under Heaven.

6. *Juſtice* and *Uprightneſs* towards *All*. This comprehends the reſt; and ſuperadds, if you will. Now *Uprightneſs* doth conſiſt in four things.

1. *Truth and Veracity*, where Men take our Words.

2. *Fidelity* and *Faithfulneſs*, where Men commit to our Truſt.

3. *Performance*, where Men do Promiſe and engage.

4. *Candor*, where Men Cenſure: and Moderation, where Men Puniſh.

To the three firſt of theſe, I will ſpeak together. *Truth* and Veracity, where Men depend on our Words: *Fidelity* and Faithfulneſs, where Men commit to our Truſt: and *Performance*, where we our ſelves Promiſe and engage.

And for *Truth* and *Faithfulneſs* in keeping our Words one with another, that theſe belong to Righteouſneſs, are our Uprightneſs and Integrity, theſe things I propoſe. If there be not Truth among Men, then we are not ſure one of another; unleſs we have one another in Priſon. And if there be not *Performance* in purſuance of their Engagements, then we muſt be ſtill going to Law one with another: and St. *Paul* hath put an ill Character upon this going to Law, and Litigiouſneſs. *One's Word is a ſacred Obligation*: A Man cannot give another a greater aſſurance than his Word; and he that doth not keep his Word, is devoid of all Righteouſneſs. And one may wonder, that Men make no more account of their Words, ſeeing it is the fundamental Ground of all Religion; it is the Ground and Foundation of all ſecurity between Man and Man. Society and Converſe depend upon this; elſe what is this but that the Treacherous and Perfidious will be too hard for his

his Neighbour. This that I am now upon, is called *Benevolence*, and that universal Benevolence, that God by his own Right-hand did sow in the Nature of Man, and did plant when he made Man upon Earth; that universal Benevolence, which Spirits the Intellectual World, doth require of each Man towards another Faith and Truth. Now, in resemblance thereof, and in participation of this universal Benevolence, which is in the Superior World, the Intellectual World of Soul and Spirit; you have the Resemblance of this in the inferior World, *viz.* the Suitableness and Fitness that is in one thing to accommodate another. As you see the whole Creation of God is mutual and Beneficial: there is nothing that is, though it be devoid of the perfection of Reason and Understanding; but it hath, as its Dowry, a Disposition and Fitness to accommodate the Universe, to some necessary use and purpose: And this likewise is agreeable to the *Light of Nature*; there has not been any Noble or Generous Person amongst the Heathen, but they have deeply charged themselves in this particular. To Instance, *Regulus*, a famous *Roman*, being in the Wars taken Prisoner, he had his Liberty given him upon his Parole, to seek an exchange. He goes Home, and cannot effect it, and though it cost him his Life, he would Return. The Justice of *Aristides* is so eminent, that his Name is convertible with Justice. He would not consent to an Act of Treachery or Perfidiousness to save his Life: and this a good Author saith of him when he sat in Council, and was in the exercise of Authority and Government, he would do nothing in consideration of, and with respect to his private advantage. Among the *Barbarians* (as they are called) in *Scythia*, this Justice was an eminent piece of Religion amongst them; they were called *Barbarians*, because they had no Culture amongst them; *Justin.* but

Disc. I.

Vol. III. but they were famous for Moderation, and the Love of Righteouſneſs. A good Author ſpeaks this of them: It ſeems Wonderful and Miraculous, that Nature ſhould give that to the Barbarous *Scythians* who had no Culture nor Education, which the *Grecians*, who had the advantage of all Learning and Education, did not attain to, by the Doctrines of all their Wiſe-men, and the Precepts of their Philoſophers. And it often comes to paſs, that Culture and Education, which hath ſo great advantage as to the Civiliſing of Mens Manners, yet they render them more Villainous, than by the uncultivated Principles of Nature they would ever have proved. Therefore we ſay of ſome, that they are *wittily Wicked*; witty to find out the Inventions of Cruelty. In the way of Reaſon indeed, it ſhould be otherwiſe; for *Solomon* hath obſerv'd. *Train up a Child in the way that he ſhould go: and when he is old he will not depart from it.* *Didiciſſe fideliter Artes emollit Mores nec ſinit eſſe feros.* But ſtill my Obſervation is true, and if any queſtion it, I will give him this Inſtance of it, an Inſtance of Barbarity beyond the practice of any unciviliſed Nation; and that is in the direful *Inquiſition* which forces Men from the internal ſenſe of their own Minds; while the Reaſon of their Minds cannot be ſatisfied; which is unavoidable to the Perſons when the Reaſon of the thing appears to them: to force them, by Racks and Tortures, Burnings and Gibbits; this is ſuch an Inhumanity and Barbarity, that the moſt Unciviliſed part of the World was never yet acquainted withal. This is an affront to humane Nature, and doth controul the Laws of God's Creation: for Men have no Power over a Man's Internal Senſe, for it is wholly Govern'd by Reaſon. The Mind of Man is a noble thing; the more unreaſonable this is, the more unaccountable; becauſe the Internal Senſe of the Mind Creates no

Pro. 22. 6.

Diſturbance

Diſturbance to the World. I ſpeak of that wherein there is no talk about the Opinions; and where no humane Law can take notice of it. Theſe are the firſt three. Diſc. I.

Laſtly. *Candor*, when we Cenſure others; and *Moderation* when we Puniſh not to the utmoſt Deſert: and that for theſe four Reaſons.

1. Whoſoever he is that Walks upon a Precipice, is in danger of Falling. As Miſchievous and as ſpiteful as the *Jews* were againſt St. *Paul*, from whom he received five times *forty ſtripes ſave one*; yet they would not come to the utmoſt, for they abated one of the forty ſtripes. For according to the Law of their uſage, they could not in Puniſhment inflict above forty: Now becauſe the Whip conſiſted of three Cords, he received thirteen Stripes; whereas if they had given fourteen, they had exceeded; therefore they abated One.

2. Let us remember what St. *James* tells us, *That in many things we offend all*; and let us well Weigh and Conſider what our Saviour hath hinted to us; *he that is without fault, let him caſt the firſt Stone.* Let him puniſh condignly, let him Cenſure ſeverely.

3. Whoſoever is Puniſhed in Meaſure, he condemns himſelf, and doth Abſolve his Judge: but if he be Puniſhed *ultra Meritum*, beyond his Deſert, he is exaſperated, he is put upon Revenge, and he thinks he Suffers not as a Malefactor, but as a Martyr, that is Over-born by Power.

4. Let us always remember, that if God did not Pardon, and abate us ſomething, what would become of us.

And now for your better ſecurity in this caſe, I propoſe two things to your thoughts.

1. That you would not be eaſily Provoked.

2. That if you be Provoked, you would ſit down with *moderate Reparation.*

1. That you may not eaſily be *Provoked*; I propoſe two things.

Firſt. Be not *Quick* in *Reſenting.*

Secondly. Make the beſt *Conſtruction* the caſe will admit. If the Offence be in Speech, or in Action; if it be indifferent, and may bear two interpretations, and may be taken Better or Worſe; the Explication may be fairer, or harſher; then think with thy ſelf, that he meant not that which is the Worſt; but he was miſtaken in the thing; or that it was not done in reference to Me; or ſome other Apology. For never any Man Did that in a Paſſion, which he will Juſtify afterwards: Therefore be not Quick in Reſenting the Injury. Or, ſuppoſe that he did not Mean ſo kindly; I would have a Man be Afraid to expoſe himſelf to Provocation; for, a *Man hath himſelf before Provocation, and Enjoys the free Uſe of his Reaſon: after he is Provoked, it is a queſtion how much of Himſelf will remain with himſelf.* We may think that he did Miſtake the thing; and thus we ſhould chooſe to Judge for our Security; that we do not Loſe our ſelves by extravagant Speaking, by Provocation, or falling into Paſſion. And two things I here offer.

Firſt, It will *coſt a Man leſs*, to Fruſtrate an Injury by a mild Interpretation, than to Retaliate.

Secondly, A Man may better preſerve and keep Himſelf *in compaſs* before, then after he has given way to Provocation.

2. For the 2*d*; if you be provoked, yet to ſit down with *Moderate Reparation.* I propoſe two things.

(1.) It will more *Eaſily* be had; with leſs trouble, and coſt.

(2.) It

(2.) It will make of an Enemy, a *Friend.* Diſc. I.

(1.) *Moderate Reparation will more eaſily be had*; with leſs Trouble and coſt. I believe you that have been Peace-makers, can Witneſs to the Truth of what I ſay: That many Men might have been great Gainers, if they had contented themſelves with a fair Reparation: Whereas after a great deal of Trouble and Pains, they have been forced to ſit down with Loſs. I would never think that were Right in my Own caſe, unleſs it was Right in the Eyes of a Third Perſon that is unconcern'd, and a lover of Righteouſneſs. No Man ſhould be fond of his Own Perſuaſions, where he is concerned: Yea, the Law will not admit of this; and the Law is Grounded upon Reaſon. Therefore I would not Truſt my ſelf as a Judge, where I am a Party.

(2.) It will *make an* Enemy become a *Friend.* As reſenting of an Injury, may make that to be an Injury, which was innocently Meant, or innocently Done: So, not to Reſent that which was injuriouſly or badly Intended; not to take notice of it; you thereby Nullifie a bad Intention: So you will oblige the Miſchievous Perſon: And the Senſe of his own Baſeneſs, that he did intend harm, will make him Condemn himſelf, and account himſelf Baſe and Unworthy: And ſo of an Enemy he may become a Friend.

This is what I thought fit to offer to your conſideration upon this Head of *Righteouſneſs*, or fair and equal Dealing with a Man's Neighbour.

DISCOURSE II.

The Moral Part of Religion reinforced by Chriſtianity.

2 TIT. 11, 12.

For the Grace of God, that bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; Teaching us, that denying Ungodlineſs, and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent World.

Diſc. II. THUS far we have proceeded; I have made it appear, that we do all of us Owe our hope of Happineſs to the *Grace and Goodneſs* of God; according to the Terms of the Goſpel: and that the Goſpel doth require of us, that we Avoid *Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts*, and Poſitively (which amounts to the ſame) *to Live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly.* Of the Two firſt of theſe I have given you an account.

Σωφρόνως. I. To be *Sober* in our ſelves: of good Minds, of the very complexion of Vertue; not vainly Fraught and poſſeſt, not giddily Minded and Intoxicated; having over-weening thoughts of our ſelves; but Modeſt and Humble.

For the *other Part*, not Senſual and Brutiſh, abuſing our Bodies by an Exceſs: But Governing them as the Manſions of our Souls; and as Tools and Inſtruements of Virtue. Now herein if any one Fails, he cannot go further or make any Progreſs in the Buſineſs of Religion. For he that

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is Unapt in himſelf, in vain goes out to any At- Diſc. II.
tempt; for Conceit ſpoiles the Ingenuity of the Mind; and Intemperance ſpoils the Temper of the Body.

II. To be *Righteous* towards Others. When well conſtituted in our ſelves, then we go forth to act; and the firſt thing we meet with abroad, is our Neighbour, *i. e.* Every one with whom we have to do; and with theſe we muſt deal Juſtly, Equally and Fairly; and do to them as we would have them do to our ſelves. Δικαίως.

If we have to do with *Superiors*, then Reverence; if with our *Betters*, then upon any conſideration of excellency that is in him, accordingly Value and Eſteem him, and Learn of him.

If with one of Juſt proportion with thy ſelf, put not thy ſelf before him, but walk in an equal pace, Give him place as well as Take place of him; take it by Turns: Hear him ſpeak, as well as ſpeak to him: you meet upon even Terms, and ſo Part.

If with thy *Inferior*; do not ſlight or Contemn him; but Hearten and Encourage him, and ſo carry him on to Higher Perfection: Lend him thy Hand, to quicken him on to ways of Vertue and Well-doing. No Man for his inferiority or diſtance from thee, is Contemptible; for the Higher need the Poor, as well as the other need them: If it were not for the Poorer, for ought I know, the Higher muſt do the loweſt Drudgeries themſelves; and none are to Deſpiſe a neceſſary Inſtrument.

If thou find one in *Miſery* or *Neceſſity*; then Compaſſionate; then Help him to bear his Burthen; and Harden not thy ſelf againſt thy own Fleſh.

If thou light upon thy *Benefactor*, acknowledge his Kindneſs: He bears the Image of God to thee; Bleſs him, and Bleſs God for him.

Vol. III. And *whoſoever* he is, thou haſt to do with; though he be a Perſon whom thou never ſaweſt before, and art not likely to ſee again; yet be ſure in all things to do him Right; that when he Leaves thee, he may ſay he met with a *Man*, and with a *Chriſtian*, and be encouraged to Travel further, becauſe thou that art a Stranger to him, did ſo well by him. And yet further, if this Man whom thou thus lighteſt upon, Require ought of thee, wherein thou canſt do him good, and thy ſelf no hurt; plainly tell him the Truth, that he may go away well inſtructed: and if he commit any thing to thee, do not Deceive him; or Reſtore to him what he commits to thee, when he calls for it. And if he do on his Part that that is Diſproportionate, be ſlow to Reſent it; but Mend it by this Candid Conſtruction, and fair Interpretation, and ſo ſhall he Reflect upon himſelf, and ſee his own Baſeneſs. And thus having brought it home to all particular occaſions of Life; in the cloſe of all I have told you, that the Univerſal Benevolence that doth Spirit the *Intellectual* World, doth Require theſe mutual and interchangeable Offices univerſally one toward another. And for a lower participation of it, you have in the *Inferior* World a Fitneſs and Diſpoſition in one thing to ſerve another; there being nothing in Nature, but as it is Conſervative of it ſelf in its Being and natural Perfection, ſo alſo is it accommodate to ſerve another. So that we may conclude, that Treachery, and all ſorts of Falſeneſs and Perfidiouſneſs, are Prodigious in the World; and do tend to the Defacing the Inſtitution of God.

Εὐσεβῶς. III. And now I come to the third; To live *Godly*. To perform all Duty towards God thy Creator. And this I am ſure thou wilt acknowledge to be Godlineſs, and included in Chriſtianity; and more than a Heathen Vertue, To perform all

ll duty towards God, which comprehends these Disc. II.
Eight Things.

1. *Reverence* and Regard of the Divine Majesty. Now this depends upon great and worthy Apprehensions, of the Divine Excellencies and Perfections; and doth express it self by Prostration before God; Sense of our Inferiority and Distance.

2. *Submission* to Him, and Obedience to his Commands. And this is founded in the Relation that we stand in to Him: This is our State, and God's Due, if he be our Maker. If He have Dominion, Title and Property to us; then are we his Peculiar, and we Owe him all Submission and Obedience.

3. *Reference* of our selves to Him, and dependance upon his Pleasure; for we are best in his Hands. This doth suppose placing a Trust, Affiance and Confidence in him: Otherwise we shall never Refer our selves to Him.

4. *Love and delight* in Him, Harmony and Complacence with Him. This will make us Acquiesce in him; and what is more lovely then the first and Chiefest Good? and God is the first and chiefest Good.

5. *Thankfulness* to Him, for his Benefits, free communication and Influence; and this is advanced by our sense of our Unworthiness, and a sense of our Incapacity to make a just Retribution.

6. Since He hath been Faithful to thee in all time past of thy Life, *Trust* him for the time to come.

7. Since he is the Centre of thy Soul, *Rest in* Him: for the Centre is the place of Rest.

8. Since He is thy utmost End; *Subordinate all* things to Him. And this is strictly Godliness. These things, and the things that these carry along with them, do Express and Declare a Man's Duty towards God. And we are naturally obliged in

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all theſe particulars, to our Maker. And when thou haſt done all this, then I do aſſure thee, that thou art a *Godly* Perſon; and art gone beyond thoſe Heathen Vertues that fall ſhort of Religion. And yet when thou haſt done all, I can ſtill aſſure thee, thou haſt not gone one ſtep beyond true Reaſon, and haſt done no more than what exactly becomes a Moral Agent; and none can give an Account of the uſe of his Reaſon, either to God, or himſelf; if he be a Stranger to theſe Inſtances of Piety, or Devotion to God. For were it not for this mighty Power of Mental Contemplation of this Excellent Object we call God, it had not much mattered, if inſtead of the Perfection we call *Reaſon* (in the World) there had been only a higher Elevation of that which we call *Senſe* and Imagination. For then in the Scale of the Creatures the ſeveral Rounds of that Ladder would have been at a more even diſtance. The Reaſon of our Minds is not ſurer of any thing that is in the World, then that there is a God. For thus we know, and every Man may know, That *God made him*; and this is an Argument fairly before him: *He that cannot continue himſelf in Being when he hath it, certainly he could not bring himſelf into Being, when he was Nothing.* Forthat which cannot do the Leſs, cannot do the Greater: and it is leſs to maintain a thing in Being when it hath Being, than to bring a thing into Being when it is quite out of Being. We prove a Cauſe Antecedent, by an *Effect* Conſequent; and this is the beſt Argument in the World. Now no account is to be given to the Reaſon of a Man's Mind, of the Being of the World, but that there was a God. For thus: If we Men be Intelligent Agents and Voluntary; God was at leaſt ſo, or much More; for Lower cannot produce Higher, nor a weak produce a ſtronger. If therefore we are Intelligent Agents and Voluntary: He that made the World, was much more ſo. Now

Now this Notion, that there is a God that made the World, it hath an even Proportion to the Reaſon of all Ages. All Perſons of any Improvement and Indifferency (for I abate groſs Self-neglect and Faction) have this Notion, that there is a God antecedent to the World, that made the World: This hath lain even to all their Underſtandings, in all Ages and Succeſſions of time. And though we cannot comprehend the Being of God (for Finite cannot comprehend Infinite) yet if we do Acknowledge God the Firſt and Chiefeſt Goodneſs, and Aſcribe all Excellency and Perfection to Him, we do him as much Right as we are capable of. And, without doubt, God will take it as well at our Hands, becauſe it holds a Proportion to our Being, as if it were of a thouſand times more intrinſick Value, if we our ſelves had been of Higher Capacities. Since it is the Utmoſt of our Capacity, the true Uſe of our Faculties, the Improvement of the Principles of God's Creation; God will not impute to us our Fallibility and Falling ſhort, but will take the Improvement of One Talent received, as he took the Improvement of Five, to Ten. Now ſo great as is the Aſſurance that we have of God who made us, upon whom we do depend; ſo great is our Aſſurance concerning theſe Duties that we Owe. To ſpeak of both theſe Particulars. Diſc. II.

The Knowledge of God that hath been univerſally acquired in the World, and which is moſt ſaving to Man, is to *Think* that God is *Righteous*, and *Gracious*, and *Merciful*. The one is for thy *Own ſake*; the other to do *God* but tolerable Right.

1*ſt*. To do *God* but tolerable Right, I adviſe thee to Think God Righteous, or elſe thou doſt not make him ſo Good as all his Creatures ought to be. For this is for certain, The Affectation of Arbitrarineſs and Independency; the Pretence of Exor-

Exorbitance and Self-will; *theſe* are the greateſt Deformities in the Rational Common-wealth. Now the Scipture declares otherwiſe concerning God. God will *Judge the World in Righteouſneſs*. And, *All the Ways of God are Ways of Righteouſneſs, Judgment and Truth*: Therefore be ſure thou Attribute *Righteouſneſs to thy Maker*.

(2.) For thy *Own ſake*, I adviſe thee, that thou always Think, and Report of God as Gracious and Merciful: And ſo he hath declared himſelf in *Jeſus Chriſt*: And if thou doſt not think that God is Gracious and Merciful, thou ruineſt thy ſelf; and if thou tell it abroad, thou doſt all that lies in thee to make all Men deſperate. So that whoſoever doth not think God Righteous and Merciful, he doth not do God Right, nor anſwer the Principle of Natural Light, and is wholly a Stranger to Goſpel-Revelation.

Then for *our Duty*: That which is properly *Divinity*, ends in two things, *a Good Mind, and a Good Life*; that is the Effect of Divinity, or that you call *Religion in us*. If it do not bring us into a good Frame of Mind, a good Temper of Spirit, into Reconciliation with the Law of Righteouſneſs, and the Nature, Mind and Will of God, and leading a Holy Life; our Religion doth evaporate, is but a Notion: For that that is Sincere and Real, and Soul-ſaving Religion, doth finally iſſue in theſe two, To bring us to a *good Mind, and to lead a good Life*.

Chriſtianity comprehends in it, the *Moral Part of Religion*, as well as the *Inſtituted Part thereof, viz.* going to God in and through *Chriſt*. The former of theſe the Apoſtle repreſents by *Living Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly*, &c. *Sobriety*, which terminates in our Selves: *Righteouſly*, which refers to our Neighbours: And then *Godlineſs*, which peculiarly refers to God, and lies in an inward Senſe and high

gh Eſteem of God in our Minds; and expreſſes Diſc. II.
ſelf in all Acts of Devotion, and Obedience to
od. For a Man in his Acting, Carriage, and Be-
aviour, ſhews what Mind he is of: So thoſe that
ave a high Eſteem of God in their Thoughts, will
rtainly expreſs themſelves in all Acts of Devoti-
n and Obedience towards God: And in theſe *three*,
at which we call the *Moral Part of Religion*, is
mprehended.

For the Notion and Account of Morality, you
uſt know it conſiſts in this: The Congruity and
roportion between the Action of an Agent and his
bject. He acts Morally that doth obſerve the
roportion of an Action to its Object; that is,
e doth Terminate a due Action upon its proper
bject; as I will make appear; that you may di-
inguiſh between the *Moral Part of Religion*, and
e *Inſtituted Part of Religion*, and the *Inſtrumental*
art of Religion.

To inſtance, Hatred and Diſreſpect towards
at Being we depend upon for all that we have, is
n *Immoral thing*; that is, it is an Unequal and Pre-
oſterous thing; it is an Action Diſproportionable,
nequal, Unfit.

Again; for a Creature to be *Inſolent*, and riſe up
gainſt his Creator, is an Action Unſuitable, and
iſproportionate to an Intelligent Agent; nothing
ore Abſurd. Theſe things therefore are *Immoral*,
ecauſe there is an Unſuitableneſs between the Acti-
n and the Object of the Action.

Misbehaviour in God's Family: For God is the
overnour of the World; and the whole World is
is Family. Now for any One to act unduly, to
ll *a beating his Fellow-Servants*; this is *Misbehavi-*
r in God's Family; it is Undue, Undecent, Un-
omely; it is *Immoral*, Impure, Unholy in it ſelf;
Undue, Unfit: And if it be immediately againſt
od, we call it *Ungodlineſs*; if immediately againſt

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a Man's *Neighbour*, we call it *Unrighteouſneſs*; if againſt a Man's *Self*, it is contrary to Sobriety.

To ſay a Man *is Immoral*, you make him as Bad as the Devil: And if *Adam* had not firſt been Immoral, he had never tranſgreſſed in a Poſitive Inſtitution. For the Fear of God was not before his Eyes; nor the Love of God ruling in his Heart, when he did Confederate with an Apoſtate Creature, and Affected a State of Arbitrarineſs, God unconſulted. Wherefore *Sobriety*, *Righteouſneſs*, and *Godlineſs*, are the due Perfections of an Intellectual Nature, upon a Moral Account. For theſe are the things that are *Good in themſelves*, and Sanctifie by their Preſence, and are neceſſary and indiſpenſable. They are not Means to higher Ends; but Ends themſelves. There cannot be a Relaxation or Commutation in theſe Particulars, upon any account. But the Intellectual Nature is neceſſarily and unavoidably under an Obligation to Acts of Sobriety, to Acts of Righteouſneſs, and to Acts of Godlineſs. Of all the *Inſtrumental Parts of Religion*, you cannot ſay ſo of them, put them altogether: For all the Other things in Religion are but in Order to theſe. Theſe are the things that make Men *God-like*; theſe are the things that are *Final* and *Ultimate*; theſe are the things that do Sanctifie Humane Nature by their Preſence. A *Hypocrite*, he may Pray; and the *Profane Perſon* (when he is in a better fit) he may call upon the Name of God: But here, neither the Hypocrite, nor the Profane, have any due Reverence of God in their Minds, Submit not to him, neither Obey Him, Depend not upon Him, Delight not in Him, do not Move to Him as a Centre, nor Refer all to Him as the utmoſt End. As for the *Moral Part* of Religion, they have not the leaſt Tincture of it; for that does Sanctifie the Subject, and make them really *God-like*. Theſe are the things that are neceſſary

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at all times, and theſe are the things that are Self-evident; no ſooner is a Man told of them, but he knows them to be True. All Men know that they are to be Sober, and that they ought to deal Righteouſly and fairly with others; and all Men know they ought to have Reverence of Deity: He that never Thought of them, if he Hear them but ſpoken of, he cannot but Own them. And by the Inherence of theſe in him, a Man is made as truly Holy, as a Man is Sound by Health in his Body, or Strong by Strength. Diſc. II.

Of theſe I may ſay,

1ſt. Some of them are according to the *Nature of God*; as Holineſs and Righteouſneſs.

2. Some are founded in the *Relation* we ſtand in to God, as his Creatures; as Reverence, Adoration, Submiſſion to God, Referring our ſelves to Him. *Religio eſt imitari quod Colimus.*

3. Some riſe out of *our Capacity*. As we are Rational, and Intelligent, and Voluntary Agents: ſo we are under the Obligation to all Rational Acts. Every thing muſt Act according to its Nature; therefore an Intelligeut Agent is under an Obligation to act rationally in what he doth.

4. Some of theſe are requiſite in reſpect of our *Make and Compoſition* of Parts, *viz.* part Spirit, and part Body. In the Spirit, therein we communicate with Angels: in the part which is *Body*, therein we deſcend to the lower World. Hence it follows, that the Nobler ought to have the advantage and the Government of the Inferior, and that the State of the Soul is to be Preferred before bodily Circumſtances.

5. Laſtly. Some of them are founded upon the *Relation* we ſtand in to our *Fellow Creatures*; as fair and equal Dealing. For either they are our *Equals*, and then all fairneſs and regard, as we would have them Regard us: or elſe *Inferiors*; and then all Tenderneſs and Encouragement

Vol. III. ment : or if it be the Creatures *below us*, then it is Mercifulneſs ; for *the Merciful Man is Merciful to his Beaſt.*

Pro. 12. 10.

So you ſee of what *Foundation* in Religion, theſe are. You muſt Unmake the whole Species of Creatures, or you cannot take out theſe Principles of Righteouſneſs, Equity and Fairneſs ; theſe Principles of Piety and Devotion.

Theſe things *are of Certainty to all the World.* Whereas take other things in Religion (as theſe) the Immortality of Reaſonable Souls ; Future Rewards and Puniſhments ; God pardoning Sin to all thoſe that do Repent ; Divine Aid and Aſſiſtance, as it is declared in the Goſpel ; choice Points of Religion : Theſe the famous *Philoſophers* did only Hope they were True ; but they were not aſſured of them. But of all the Other they were undoubtedly Aſſured. We indeed have extraordinary Aſſurance ; becauſe we have Goſpel-Revelation, they are certain to us Chriſtians : But they were but of Hope, and fair Perſuaſions, and Belief, to the Philoſophers, who had no Scripture. Yet many of them wrote excellently upon theſe Subjects ; They Hoped all theſe were true : but we are ſatisfied and aſſured. But in the other Points, we have the Harmony of the whole World : It is the Language of every Ones Thoughts ; it is Nature's Senſe that theſe things are ſo. Theſe are things of general Obligation, and Univerſal Acknowledgment ; For they bear a true and even proportion to the common Reaſon of Mankind. As to theſe things, we all agree, as well as we Agree that the Sun Enlightens the World.

The Text tells us, They are not only Acknowledged ; but further Eſtabliſhed and Settled by the Doctrine of the Goſpel. Therefore theſe things have a *double Sanction* from God. *Firſt*, they are the *Principles of his Creation*, diſcoverable and know-

knowable by Natural Light. *Secondly*, they are again declared and included in the Terms of the *Covenant of Grace*: For the Text says, *the Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared to all Men; Teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and Worldly Lusts, we should live Soberly, Righteously, and Godly in this present World.* These have all the Settlement possible: things Settled when God first *made* Man, and further Settled by the *Grace of the Gospel.* Dist. II.

So that to secure our selves from Dreams, and Enthusiasms, let us Confine our selves to the Dictates of *Reason*, and Letter of *Scripture*; which gives joynt Assurance and Acknowledgment to *Morals.* Now, if any Man pretend a *Revelation* from Heaven, and do not shew his Warant from Holy Scripture; which is God's Instrument in the World; *this* we have to say; you come in the Name of God; you say you have a Revelation from him; but I must then have a Revelation too, before I can believe you. Just as St. *Peter* and *Cornelius*; the One had a Revelation as well as the Other, they had never come together else. So that if you go to Revelation, you must shew it me in Scripture. If you pretend any thing out of Scripture, I must have a Revelation also, before I believe it. But in respect of the Principles of Reason, God speaks generally at once to all: there needs no other Assurance in that which is Reason. Act. 10.

And then for *Institutes*, which are the Voluntary Results of the Divine Will; Scripture is so full and clear in them; that of *Institutes* we may say these four things.

1. Nothing of Matter of Faith but it is in *Scripture.*

2. Nothing is necessary in way of Faith, that is *Otherwise* Expressed than in Scripture.

3. Nothing of matter of Faith is Certain, as it is *further made out*, than in Scripture.

4. Men may live in Chriſtian Love and Union, though they do not *Agree in Expreſſing* their Faith, in any other Words than thoſe that are in Scripture.

Nunquam aliud Natura, aliud Sapientia dicit. Juven. Sat. 14.

They are greatly Miſtaken who Oppoſe in Religion, Matters of Reaſon, and Points of *Faith*; and think in Religion we are not to Know, but only to believe: and think that when *Morality* is ſpoken of, there is nothing to be underſtood but ſome Complementary Vertue. But here you ſee what is involved in Morality, *viz.* all Reverence of *Deity*, all Submiſſion to Him, Dependance upon Him, Love and Delight in Him, Thankfulneſs to Him, *&c.* All *Righteouſneſs* between Man and Man, Fairneſs, Juſtice, Equity, reaſonable Dealing; doing to one another, as we would have others do to Us: All *Sobriety* and Self-Government, *&c.* And will any Man ſay, that theſe things are but *Heatheniſh* Vertues? Let not us therefore, to whom the Grace of the Goſpel is declared, be Averſe from Hearing and practiſing thoſe Duties and Vertues, that are Founded in our Creature-State: For thou not canſt be an Intelligent Agent, but thou art under the Obligation to all theſe. And yet to make you full and Compleat *Chriſtians*, I have two things more.

1. *Repent* of all your Sins, Failings, and Miſcarriages

2. Be ſure *Hold the Head*; make due Acknowledgment to the Son of God, whom he hath ſet up to be a *Prince and a Saviour*, whom God in Love and Good-Will, hath given to us, that we believing in him, may be Saved. And ſo now I have brought you through Religion; from the Beginning of God's Creation, from that part of it which is Connatural to our Make, to that that is Final in it, *God in Chriſt.*

I have but one Word more, and that is in the Subſequent Verſe. Diſc. II.

Looking for the Bleſſed hope and the Glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.

Theſe things are Conſiſtent with, and Connatural, and in order to the *Bleſſed hope*. Where you may Obſerve.

1. This Bleſſed Hope is an *Argument* to all Holineſs.

2. It is propoſed to us in Scripture *as ſuch*.

3. That we are ſo *to Uſe it*. Now, he *that hath this Hope in him, Purifies himſelf, even as he is pure.* And it is *Chriſt's* intent to *Purifie to Himſelf a Peculiar People Zealous of Good works*; which agrees fully with *This*, that *the Grace of God which bringeth Salvation, teacheth us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World.* 1 Joh. 3. 3.

Whence it is apparent, that we are *Chriſtians* only in external Denomination, and have not a Principle of Divine and Heavenly Life, if we are not Reconciled in Nature and Diſpoſition to the Law of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth.

DISCOURSE III.

The Reconciliation of Sinners by the Death of Chriſt.

HEB. 2. 17.

Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his Brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High-Prieſt in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People.

Diſc. III.

1. *IT behoved him.*] In the *Greek* 'tis, *He made himſelf a Debtor*; He became under Obligation; and it is no more then is Fit and *Becoming*. 'Tis no diſparagement to the Higheſt and Wiſeſt to be ruled and determinated by the *Reaſon of things*; and to obſerve that order they require. In this there is Real Goodneſs, and the fulleſt Liberty; and all beſides this, is Pride, Haughtineſs, Impotency, and Exorbitancy. It is ſaid here, it *became* our Saviour, or He made himſelf a Debtor, to do what He did. Though He Acted willingly, and laid down his Life freely; yet this *became* Him in reſpect of *his Compaſſion* and great Good-Will to Men. That is the firſt.

Ωφειλε

2. It became him in reſpect of his *Father's Will*, and the purſuit of that buſineſs in which he was engaged. From whence you may take notice; that if we ſpeak worthy things of God and Chriſt, we ſpeak without danger, and we do not diſparage the Almighty, or caſt Limitations upon Omnipotency

Non eſt Deo indignum dicere ex uno ſuppoſito Deum teneri ad aliud.

ency it ſelf, to ſay, upon ſuppoſition of one thing, that another muſt of neceſſity follow. As for inſtance: If God make a promiſe, He muſt perform it: If He makes a Creature Intelligent and Voluntary, He muſt uſe him as ſuch. If the Creature He hath made, be Finite and Fallible; He muſt give him Allowance. And therefore, you have many Scriptures that ſpeak of God's Juſtification in this reſpect; in which he appeals to Humane Faculties. *Let us Reaſon together, ſaith the Lord:* Iſ. 1. 18. *Judge, I pray you, between me and my Vineyard*; And Iſ. 5. 3. elſewhere he ſaith, *Remember and ſhew your ſelves* Iſ. 46. 8. *Men.* Diſc. III.

'Tis well reſolved by one, That it was not ſo much boldly, as worthily ſpoken by him that ſaid; *There is that in God that is more Beautiful than Power, than Will, and Soveraignty*, viz. *his Righteouſneſs, his Goodneſs, his Juſtice, Wiſdom, and the like.* But to go on. *Aliquid in Deo formoſius quam Voluntas.*

3. *It behoved him in all things, to be made like unto us.*] What, *Sin* and all? No: God forbid; that is excepted. *He was in all things made like unto us, Sin only excepted.* Hence we learn. Heb. 4. 5.

1. That *Single Texts* of Scripture are not to be wreſted; but muſt be Interpreted according to the conſent and harmony of other Scriptures. This is a good Rule: For Scripture, as it is a matter of Faith, is not a ſingle Text, but all the Scripture: and not ſo much the Words, as the Senſe; that Senſe which is verified by other Scriptures. For you may take it for granted, that there is no matter of Faith, or Duty that ſtands upon the Authority of one ſingle Text: and that ſenſe which is not otherwhere, is no where to be taken. But if this will not ſatisfie; Sin need not be excepted. For God doth not take notice of it, nor Own it as any production of His. Therefore when he ſpeaks of all things; Sin doth not come into the number;

Vol. III. as not being a thing that depends upon Divine Production; but is our Deficiency; not Gods Efficiency; but our Exorbitancy and Iniquity. 'Tis not ſo much an Effect, as a Defect; it is impotency, deformity, and it is juſt like motion in the Paralytick, which is not from Strength of Nature, but from its Weakneſs. Every inordinate Paſſion and irregular Motion is of this Nature. And this is ſpoken to our juſt reproof. But then I will make this Advantage of it: The Scripture doth not take notice of an Exception of any thing in this place; from which we are to know, that God expects that the Reader of Scripture ſhould be of an Ingenuous Spirit; and uſe Candor, and not lie at the Catch: For the Scripture is to be read as a Man would read a Letter from a Friend; in which he doth only look after what was his Friend's Mind and Meaning; not what he can put upon the Words.

2. Since Scripture, which is God's Inſtrument, and Conveys to us directions in matter of Faith and Hope, Uſeth this Liberty, ſometimes to leave out ſo neceſſary an Exception as you have heard: Let us be *fair condition'd one towards another*, and give one another Allowance. If we Miſtake any Man's meaning, or find cauſe of Offence in his Words; give him leave to ſpeak again, and interpret his own Mind and Meaning; either to Retract or to ſupply. For in Truth, a Man did not ſay That which he did not Mean. And we have Reaſon to give one another this Liberty; ſince we are ſo eaſily Miſtaken, and oftentimes ſpeak ſuddenly and in a Paſſion. And Scripture it ſelf muſt have Candor in the peruſal of it. Certainly, we ought not to make one another Offenders for a Word. But I muſt not ſtand upon this.

It became him in all things to be made like unto us. You ſee here is an Exception: and we have a Rule where

where there is an exception, the Rule holds more strong in all other things. If only Sin then be excepted, nothing else is to be excepted: Therefore, our Saviour was *made like unto us.* Disc. III.

1. In our *Limitation*, Contraction, bodily Shape. He was as we are, confined, to Time, Place, Bodily Weakness and Infirmity; and therefore his Body was no more in every place then ours is. And where is then the Doctrine of *Transubstantiation?* If this were true, what need our Saviour Travel from place to place, as we read in the Gospel he did? But,

2. He was like unto us in *Passions*, *Affections* and sensitive Apprehensions: Only there is this Difference; *in us* they ebb and flow; we feel sudden Motions and Transportations; but in *our Saviour*, Passions, and Affections, and Sensitive Apprehensions were exactly Governed. You have something of this in the Prayer of our Saviour *Christ* in the Garden: *Let this Cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not my Will, but thine, be done.* Matt. 26. 39.

Ενυλοι λογοι *More Corporeo concipimus cogitamus.*

3. He was like unto us in our *Necessities* of Relief and Support, as Eating, Drinking, Sleeping, Cessation from Action. Therefore, we read, that he was *Weary*, *Hungry*, and the like. So, that you see, *our Saviour* by partaking with us in our Natures, partook with us in our Weakness and Infirmity: but *We*, by partaking with Him, *partake of the Divine Nature*; which is free from all want and Imperfection. Joh. 4. 6. Mar. 11. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

But if any stumble at what hath been said; I will satisfie him. Our Imperfections are either *Negative* or Privative: *Negative* are those that belong to God's Creation; for God made us in such a Measure, in all Negative shortness, Imperfections and Weakness; and our Saviour did share with us in these. But *Privative* Imperfections are Fruits of our Apostacy, Degeneracy, and the like; and in

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theſe our Saviour did not partake with us; nor in thoſe things which are founded in them. Now as the conſideration of our Shortneſs, Infirmities, Paſſion and Imperfection, ſhould make us Humble, Sober, Modeſt; ſo alſo the conſideration of our Saviour's partaking with us in theſe things, ſhould make us not to deſpiſe this State. For there is nothing in it ſo Bad, which our Saviour, out of Good-will, did refuſe for our ſake; and they may be without Sin. And this ſhould make us Moderate towards one another; and patiently bear one with another; and make no ill interpretation. God hath not ſo deeply reſented the Fall of Man, as He did the Apoſtacy of the Angels. He remembers that *We* are but Duſt, and conſiſt of Body and Spirit; and ſo are diſpoſed to various Inclinations, Temptations, *&c.* and for this, God makes Allowance; for theſe, I ſay, God makes Abatement. And then the Senſe of theſe Infirmities ſhould awaken us to expect the happy Change that is declared. For Chriſt hath promiſed, that

Phil. 3. 21. *He will change theſe Vile Bodies of ours, that they may be faſhion'd like unto his glorious Body*; and this *Mor-*

1 Cor. 15. 33, 44, 47. *tality ſhall put on Immortality, and this Corruption Incorruption*; and we ſhall have a *Spiritual Body*, by our participation of the Lord from Heaven.

In the next place it follows, That *He was like unto us, that he might be a Merciful and Faithful High-Prieſt.*

This was done with reſpect to *Us*; in a way of Compaſſion and pure Good-will. Two things evidence this unto us; That the State which our Saviour ſubmitted to, the Principle that moved him, was pure Good-will. (1.) The Motive of God's ſending him, and of his coming. (2.) The End and Buſineſs of his coming, was all from Good-will. (1.) In reſpect of God, it is ſaid, that God

Εὐδοκία τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ. φιλανθρωπία.

Joh. 3. 16. *ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son,*

that

that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but Disc. III.
have everlasting Life. Christ Jesus was the *Desire of*
all Nations: that is, the Desire of their States, their Hag. 2. 7.
Condition did require it: And God sent him of Love and Good-will to Men. And then, (2.) The *Business* that he came about: which doth give us a full Account of our Saviour's Intention, and doth justifie our Saviour's Work. For he came about a Work as certainly Divine, as the very Creation it self was: For it is no less Divine, to Restore God's Creation, than to raise a Creation out of Nothing: And this was our Saviour's Design: Which shews, that he was no Cheat nor Impostor; for he did only pretend to Good, which never any One that came with a Design to cousen the World, did ever do. Our Saviour's Great Work was, to *Bless the World*, and *to turn it from Iniquity*: What Act. 3. 26.
Pretence was there ever in the World since the Creation, in which we could not find a Flaw, but this only of *Christ Jesus*; whose Design was the restoring of God's Creation and Workmanship, deformed by Sin. And therefore let us Admire the Divine Goodness. We, guilty Wretches, our Hearts might have fail'd us, and misgiven us, that we might have done like *Adam*, when he heard God coming to him, *he hid himself*, and made him- Gen. 3. 8, 7.
self a Covering of *Fig-Leaves*. We all might have suspected, because of our Guiltiness, that if ever we did hear God, it would be in a way of Indignation, and we should hear of his Judgments. But behold the Revenge that God hath taken; He hath sent his only begotten Son to restore the Lapsed Creation, and to bring Sinful Man into a nearer Relation to himself. Now, let us remember, That Kindness, of all things, is least to be neglected: Therefore let this Kindness be thankfully received and entertained; and take Encouragement from hence to return to God, who hath invited us to

him.

him. And our own Neceſſity doth impel us; and our Return is both ſuitable and profitable: Let us Thankfully accept and own his Grace. And, laſtly, let us revenge our ſelves on our Enemies, as God doth us; that is, *Relieve*, help, and compaſſionate them, and do all we can to reclaim them, and bring them into good Order. Do not exaſperate one another, nor meditate Revenge. If God had dealt ſo by us, where had we been, and how ſad had been our Caſe? Let us be ready to ſhew Mercy, who ſtand in need of ſo much Compaſſion. 'Tis a ſhrew'd ſign a Man is not partaker of this Goodneſs and Kindneſs of God, that hath not ſuch a Senſe of it in himſelf, as to Refine his Spirit, and Regulate and Moderate the Temper and Complexion of his Mind, ſo as to make him full of Goodneſs and Kindneſs to others. And, to conclude this Particular, Let us *Truſt God* for our future State: For when he found us in our Apoſtacy, he did not only bear with us, but made fair Propoſals to us: He did pity and compaſſionate us when we were in a State of Enmity; Will he now caſt us off? No. As *Manoah*'s Wife ſaid, *If God would have killed us, he would not have ſhewed us ſo great Kindneſs.*

Judg. 13. 23.

In the next place it follows, that our *Infirmities* are *Compaſſionable*: So we find by the Text: *He was in all things like unto us, that he might be a merciful and faithful High-Prieſt*, &c.

Theſe *Three* things put together, do ſomething leſſen the Sins of Man, and procure him Pity with God.

1. That he is liable to fail and be *miſtaken.*

2. That in his Conſtitution he doth conſiſt of *Body* and *Spirit*: And,

3, That he is expoſed to all ſorts of *Temptations* from without, in this dangerous and hazardous World. So that through the Grace of God, it is not ſo much

much what Sin is, as what the Demeanour of a Person is after Sin. Therefore these two Cases differ extreamly. *1st.* A Sinner that is awakened, and considerate, that *leaves off to Sin*, that deprecates God's Displeasure, and asks his Forgiveness, and returns to his Duty; that importunes God for Mercy, and follows God's Direction; this Man's Case is compassionable. *2dly.* A Sinner that *still goes on in a way of Wickedness*, and hardens his Heart against God: I tell you these Cases differ as much as possible. And the very self-same Goodness that inclines God to pardon the former, requires him to condemn the latter. The same Goodness that doth Pardon Penitents, doth Punish Obstinacy. For these Propositions are both true, that it is Good, and Worthy of God, to pardon Sin that is Left and repented of; and also to controul Obstinacy and Impenitency. Let these two be considered; and then tell me, if you are not engaged to Repent: For it is not, you see, out of God's Severity, that he Punisheth; but it is the Rule of Right, and the Law of Goodness that require it, that all Obstinacy in Sin should be controlled. And here the way of Heaven and Hell part. 'Tis not Infirmity, 'tis not Shortness and Weakness; but Voluntary Acts of Sin, and Wilful Sins, that do distinguish the sorts of States, and that bring Men into Hell and Death. Disc. III.

1st. I *Infer* from what hath been said; That tho' we are under Guilt, yet let us *not Despair*: for if we do submit, and turn to God, 'tis a Case of Mercy, and God will forgive. There is no Proposition more credible than this, that God will certainly Pardon Sins Repented of, forsaken and left; and compassionate a Finite and Fallible Creature, if he turn to God, and ask him forgiveness, and return to Duty. Sins repented of, forsaken, and left, through God's Mercy are put to the Account of

Deus pœnitentibus, expectantibus adest.

Vol. III. of Infirmity. And you never find in Scripture that thoſe Perſons are called *Sinners*. Though there be Failings and Deviations from the Rule of Right; yet the Perſon is not denominated a *Sinner*, from a Sin that is recalled, revoked, repented, and left. But then in the

2*d*. Place, Let us have *no hard Thoughts of God* upon occaſion of his preſent Judgments, or future Denunciations. Let us conſider the Temper that is in Obſtinate Sinners. God may give Repentance to the Sinner, but he cannot give Pardon to the Impenitent.

Pro captu habent ſua Fata.

3*dly*. In the next place, let us take notice, that to be *Tempted*, and to *Sin*, are two things. For you ſee our Saviour he was Tempted, and liable to our Infirmities; but he was without Sin. For Sin ſuppoſeth the Mind and Conſent of the Perſon to be in it. If I be tempted, and aſſaulted to do the thing that is Evil, but I deny my Conſent, and will not give place to the Devil; here is the Exerciſe of Virtue, and a Proof of Loyalty. None can hinder an Offer to be made; but it lies in our Power to reſiſt it. *Satan* may tempt, but he cannot force. Neither are we alone; for God will aſſiſt us, and will not be wanting to thoſe that are willing to make uſe of his Strength. *God looks upon Men; and if any Man ſay, I have ſinned and perverted that which is right, and it did not profit me; God will ſave his Soul from Death, and his Life ſhall ſee the Light.* We are more ſure of God than of our ſelves; for we are ſlippery, unconſtant, off and on, backward and forward: But God is regular, and keeps in his way, and doth what he ſaith; there is *no variableneſs nor ſhadow of turning with him.* Now this Knowledge is of great uſe to pacifie our Minds: For there are ſome Honeſt-minded Men, that do not know how to diſtinguiſh between their *Temptation* and their *Sin*. To

Matt 4, &c.

Job 33. 27, 28.

Jam. 1. 17.

be

be *Tempted* and assualted; to have Evil in a Man's Thoughts by way of Suggestion; is unavoidable, and doth not make a Man a Sinner. But a Man *Sins* when he consents and gives up himself to the Temptation. The more you are offended at them, the less they are yours; the more they are your Burden, the less they are your Guilt. And then, Disc. III.

3*dly*. Since there is so many Temptations to Evil in the World, let us depend on the Divine Goodness, and let us not be alone in the World.

4*thly*. Let us *Counterwork* the Evil One, by frequent Proposals of Good. If there be Evil Thoughts suggested, put your selves upon good Thoughts and Motions. Do as the *good Housholder, bring out of your Treasury things New and Old.* And then, Mat. 13. 52.

5*thly*. and *Lastly*, Live *not Carelessly* in the World, Since the World is a place of so much Danger, and so full of Hazard. Do not run away with every Report, nor bite at every Bait; since we live among our Enemies in a place of Danger, Difficulty, ill Representations, and Intimations. Since we are frequently assaulted and Tempted to Evil, let us always live in the use of discerning, and put a Difference between Good and Evil; and look to our Ways, that our Foot slip not. But to go on. In the next place it follows,

Christ our High-Priest, Merciful and Faithful.] In which Words there is a most happy Conjunction; they are *three* Words of deep Signification, and great Grace; a *High-Priest*; an Instrument of great Use, and of great Service to the People. A *Merciful High-Priest*, to make the best of our Case, and to help out what is faulty: And then *Faithful*, to answer our Interest; true to our Call, and to perform God's Promise. The High-Priest in the *Jewish* Church was an eminent Instrument of God, of great Use to the People. And truly, he would be much

Vol. III. much wanted in the Chriſtian State, but that we have him in Subſtance; For the High-Prieſt was always ready, as a middle Perſon, between God and the People: And he was ſo to order himſelf, as ſtill to be in a readineſs to ſerve the People; being by God's Appointment, to make Reconciliation and Attonement for them. Now we, that go to God in a Goſpel-way, have this in Subſtance and in Truth: And they that made uſe of the High-Prieſt in the *Jewiſh* State, did touch the Hemm of Chriſt's Garment; they made uſe of Chriſt's Proxy: we make uſe of his Perſon.

But there is one in the Chriſtian World that pretends to be an Infallible Viſible Judge; and therefore is as much to us, as the High-Prieſt was to the *Jews*. Surely if God had ſet him up, a great deal of Labour might be ſaved. How eaſily then would all Controverſies be at end, and the truth of things be made appear: But here is the Miſery of the Caſe; he ſays it, but it is not proved; neither do we know how it may. For my part, I would as ſoon apply to him, If I did believe he was God's Inſtrument, and an Infallible Judge, as the People did in the *Jewiſh* State apply to the High-Prieſt. But I find now, if we may believe the Scripture, that God hath given us his *Book* to reſolve us in all Caſes; and this is the Rule of Faith: and according as it is here written, every one of us, upon the Penalty of his Salvation, muſt think, muſt believe, muſt ſpeak and do: And whoſoever ſays otherwiſe muſt look to it. Now if ſo be this Perſon that doth Uſurp upon God's Authority, and impoſe upon Men without God's Warrant; if he be not indeed God's Inſtrument, why then the Cheat is the deeper, as the Lye is the greater. And therefore let every Man ſee whom he truſt, and whom he do believe and depend upon, for the Concernments of his Soul.

There

There were *three* sorts of Oblations in the *Jewish* State, that you should do well to observe the *difference* of. In all of them there was great Use made of the *High-Priest*; and his Ministration was necessary. Disc. III.

1. There were *Sacrifices*, which were for Reparation of the Divine Majesty affronted by Sin; and these did continue till Christ came, and the High-Priest was not discharged from Offering Sacrifices while the Jewish-Temple was not dissolved.

2. There were *Gifts*; and these did signifie the Righteousness and Holiness of *Christ*: And the Pleasure that God took in them, did signifie the Delight and Pleasure that God would take in the Righteousness and Obedience of Christ. And the Scripture tells us how acceptable to God the Resignation of Christ was, and his Obedience to the Death, and Submission to the Divine Will; herein going contrary to the Spirit of Apostacy and Rebellion, that acted our first Parents.

3. There were *Tributes*: Something paid to God by way of Tribute, as an Acknowledgment of God's Dominion and Soveraignty: and to Acknowledge that they held of Him; and that God was their Supream Lord, and they his Tenants. These were the *three* Sorts of Offerings among the Jews; and here we have them in Substance, and Effect. We have the first in the Voluntary Sacrifice that Christ made of himself; in which appear'd his intire and absolute Conformity to the Will of God and self Resignation, being contented that he himself should be nothing, so the Will of God might be done. By which he doth obliterate the horrid Practice and Spirit of Apostasie which Affected to be Arbitrary.

DIS-

DISCOURSE IV.

The Reconciliation of Sinners by the Death of Christ.

HEB. 2. 17.

Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto his Brethren, that He might be a Merciful and Faithful High-Priest in things pertaining to God, to make Reconciliation for the Sins of the People.

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THE Text tells you, our Saviour was made *like unto us, that he might be a Merciful and Faithful High-Priest.* Our Saviour, Our High-Priest; Merciful, Compassionate and Faithful. These three things do afford us matter of abundance of Consolation: They are three great Names. And,

1st. For the *High-Priest.* He was in the Jewish Church an Eminent Instrument of God, the most Visible and Eminent Type of Christ that was. And truly, were not the High-Priest in the Jewish State transcendently supplied, he would be greatly missed. But thanks be to God, whereas they had the Shadow, we have the substance: The High-Priest was always a middle Person beween God and the People, to be in readiness to make Approaches to God, whatsoever the necessity was. And so He was to make an Attonement for the Sins of the People: And this being by Divine Authority, it was Effectual. And he that made use of the High-Priest then, he went to God by Jesus Christ.

2dly.

2. And then He was *Merciful, viz.* to make the best of our case; to Compassionate us in Misery, and to help us out: And; Disc. IV.

3*dly.* Not only Merciful, but *Faithful*; true to our Cause, will make the best of our Case. One that is Trusted by God for us. There were three sorts of Oblations; in all which the High-Priest was made use of. (1.) The *Sacrifices*, which were Types of the true and real Sacrifice, Christ; in which there was that which is Rational, intire Self-resignation in Opposition to Apostacy. (2.) And then *Gifts*; and that was instead of the Sweet-smelling Savour of Christ; which was his Sacrifice; and, (3.) Then there was *Tributes*, and these did acknowledge God was the Original Possessor, and Bestower of all things. These Three were under *Moses*; but they were Shadows, and incompleat: but we are compleat in Christ. That which was most remarkable among the Jews, was the *Temple*; and that which was most remarkable there, was the *Mercy-Seat*, which was the Propitiation; now, *Christ* is our Propitiation. Possessor Col. 2: 10. Ἱλαστήριον. Rom. 3: 25.

In Sacrifice there were Ten things, and the *Offerer* was to do Five. He might lay on Hands, Kill, Flea, cut up, wash the Inwards. But the other Five Things were to be done by the *Priest*; Receiving the Blood into a Vessel, Sprinkling it upon the Altar, putting Wood upon the Altar, putting Fire upon the Altar, and laying the Sacrifice upon the Wood. Let us not think, that only a Form of Words will serve turn on our Part; only to use the Name of Christ: but that what we do must be Substantial: it is not Repentance to God, unless we own the Mediator that God hath Appointed. Hence I infer.

1. We are highly concerned to *conceive aright of Christ*; of his Nature, Person, Business and Performance; which the Prophet *Daniel* tells us, was to *Finish Transgression*; Dan. 9: and 24.

Vol. III. *and make an End of Sin, and bring in Everlasting Righteouſneſs, and to blot out Iniquity.* We are highly concern'd to know our Saviour's Work, becauſe it is the Work of the preſent day. We may hereafter know our Saviour better in his Perſon; therefore let us take great care to make uſe of Him to this purpoſe, to make uſe of Him in the caſe of forgiveneſs of Sin; for he is given *to Bleſs Men, in turning them away from their Iniquities.*

Act. 3. 26.

2. Let us *Judge of God by Chriſt.* The whole Buſineſs begun at God: Therefore the work that He doth, doth very well declare of God, that God is Placable, and will Pardon Sin; and there is no fear, unleſs we be Obſtinate and continue in Unbelief. God Loves his Creature; and it is apparent in this that He Loves us truly; becauſe he doth not Indulge Sin, but goes about to make us inwardly Holy; and that we cannot be, unleſs the Love of Sin be deſtroyed, and the Power of Sin be ſubdued. For if God Work Salvation, he doth not care only for external Recovery, to make us outwardly Whole; but alſo that we have the Uſe of all our Faculties.

3. Since God's Salvation is declared, let there *not be an Evil heart of Unbelief*: For if God, when you were at the worſt, when you were without God in the World; if God did then look after you, and employ his Wiſdom to find out a way, and his Power to bring it about; having beſtowed ſo much Grace upon you, will He Refuſe you?

Next, *in things pertaining to God.*] Where I obſerve that the buſineſs of Chriſt is wholy *Spiritual.* Chriſt's Government is in the Mind, Underſtanding and Conſcience. I find that Men have been Subject to great Miſtakes in this particular. Let us begin as high as the *Jews.* The *Jews* did expect a *Meſſiah*, and talked very much of *Meſſiah*; and though He be come, and they refuſe Him, yet they tell us of

a *Messiah*. But what do they expect from their *Messiah?* An universal Deliverance from the Power of all Nations; and that all Nations must serve them. Again, many that have pretended to Spirituality, have been greatly Mistaken in the Prophesies concerning *Christ*: And the Christianity of some Persons hath had so much of Fire in it; that it hath seemed to have more of the Spirit of the Devil in it, than of the Meek and Excellent Spirit of our Saviour, who prayed for those that Crucified Him, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.* And St. *Stephen*, he writes after his Copy; he doth the like. There is a great Mistake among us, about this calm and benign Spirit. Some Persons think that Heat and Fire is real for God; but these Persons are mistaken. I would not abate any Man's Zeal for Truth; but let me better direct them. Zeal for God, is a Warmth in the Subject, that is not Fiery in respect of the Object: The Truth warms a Man to reform himself according to his Judgment; but is not Fiery and Furious toward another that is of another Apprehension. For what have I to do with others? If I find Reason to believe a thing, and I cannot do otherwise; by the self-same Rule, may another believe as he sees cause. Am I to be violent, because another is not of my Persuasion? No. But after I have received the Truth of God into my Mind by Knowledge, That am I to go out to Practise. If I have a Zeal for God and Truth; then will I be in Temper and State agreeable to it. I will not contradict the Reason of my Mind, either by Temper or Practice. I will allow my self in no known Unrighteousness; but will be as good as I ought to be; and will pursue my Judgment by practise. But as to Others, I have nothing to do with them (if I be a private Person) but by Reason and Argument; and to shew a great deal of Patience;

Disc. IV.

Lu. 23. 34. Act. 7. 60. 2 Chron. 24. 22.

Vol. III. and Meekneſs, and Gentleneſs of Spirit: Repeat again and again; if Truth be not admitted one day, it may be another. Let me be ſuch as the Doctrine of the Goſpel declares I ought to be; and then by my Example I ſhall promote the Truth. If we were but rid of our ſeveral Miſtakes and Superſtitions; and nothing left but what is ſound Religion; we ſhould be cool enough. For the greateſt Zeal is in things Doubtful and Queſtionable: but things Unqueſtionable, as intire Reſignation to God, Humility and Modeſty, Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, *&c.* there is no great Zeal in the World about theſe. Now, theſe exceed all. But who ſhall be in Authority and have the Government, *&c.* theſe things proceed from another hand. Therefore let this be a Rule; that when we ſpeak of *Chriſt*, we always Underſtand Him, as he means. Chriſt did not come into the World for Worldly Ends and Purpoſes; theſe are thihgs far below his Thoughts and Intentions. The notion of *Chriſt's Government* is for mental Illumination, Delivery from Sin, Moral Refinement, Sanctification here, and Glorification hereafter. They do act in the Spirit of Chriſt, who are Preachers of Righteouſneſs; by Words and by Practice; what is not Spiritual, is wholly foreign to Chriſt's Kingdom, and to his Government. And then again, Chriſtianity lays a Foundation of no Enmity, but only to Unrighteouſneſs and to Wickedneſs. For if we be in a true Chriſtian Spirit, we will endeavour to Reconcile, and we muſt be in Reconciliation with every thing that holds of God, and that God doth uphold. But for Unrighteouſneſs and Sin, theſe things Chriſtianity engageth us againſt. This for the *former part of the Verſe.*

Now the *latter* cannot be inferior to it; becauſe this is Final to all that went before; and we are wont to ſay, that Means are all in Order to the End. Whatſoever is declared concerning Chriſt;

what-

whatsoever the height and Excellency of his Per- Disc. IV.
son; whatsoever Worthiness: this is the advantage
that we have by it; that he makes use of all his
Power and Interest for our Benefit: and He was
appointed of God to this end, that he might
make Reconciliation for the Sins of the Peo-
ple.

I am now from these Words to give you an Account of the Business of *Reconciliation*, which is the great Undertaking and performance of our Saviour; which is the product of infinite Wisdom and Goodness; and which is our greatest concernment, as being fundamentally necessary to our Welfare and Hapiness. For it is not possible we should be made happy by God himself, if not Reconciled to Him: we are eternally undone if this be not done. *We cannot be Recovered unless herein we be Relieved*: Christ is to us but a Name, and a Notion, if this effect be not obtain'd. If we through the Spirit of God be not so wrought upon, as to be Naturalised to God; and God disposed to receive us; we shall glory but in an ineffectual Saviour.

In giving you an account therefore of this great Business (which is a work too big for the Shoulders of Men and Angels to stand under) I will proceed in this Methodical Order, and speak to these five Heads.

1. This Reconciler goes in a Way of *Moral Motion*.

2. He treats with *both Parties* at Variance.

3. He doth *equally consider the Right* of both sides.

4thly. Reconciliation must be *Mutual*.

5thly. It is acceptable every way to each Party: the Work of Reconciliation is acceptable to God and Man.

1*ſt*. The work of Reconciliation is brought about in a way of *Moral Motion*; by Perſuaſion, by way of Reaſon and Argument. It muſt be thus, becauſe the Perſons are Intelligent and Voluntary Agents, and therefore muſt thus be dealt withal: And the Reconciler muſt apply to their ſeveral apprehenſions. For Intelligent and Voluntary Agents are not drawn by Force; but fairly Perſuaded. Machines are drawn by Wires; and Animals by Senſe; but Intelligent and Voluntary Agents muſt be dealt withal by Perſuaſion and fair Inducements, and in a way of Argument. A Man cannot poſſibly be converted without his own Act; he muſt of neceſſity underſtand the Reaſon why; and give his Voluntary Conſent. It is very true, God made us without us; and it is as true, He will not ſave us without our ſelves. Therefore they deceive themſelves that expect God ſhould work upon them when they themſelves work not: When Men make Application to God, then is he ready to Concur with them: But not when Men are aſleep, lazy and incogitant. This is the firſt; this Reconciler goes in a way of *Moral Motion*.

Reconciliatio eſt utriuſq; partis.

2*dly*. He Treats with *both Parties* at variance. Therefore as to *God*, He offers to Him in a way of Agreement, his own *Sacrifice*; which was an Act of the moſt intire Reſignation that ever was in the World; and doth obliterate Man's Preſumption, Diſloyalty and bold Practiſe upon God; when he did affect a State and Arbitrarineſs, God unconſulted. But in Chriſt, there is Obedience unto Death. He makes himſelf a Nothing. Here is the clean contrary; here is a practical Revocation of the firſt Apoſtacy from God, and an Introducing a new Law of Obedience of the Creature to the Creator. Here is ſuch a condemnation of the firſt *Adam*, that the like could not be: And ſuch an Acknowledgment of God, as a fuller cannot

be

be. Now this his giving up Himself to God, is a matter with God to incline Him further toward Benignity, Mercy, Compassion, Patience and Forgiveness. I say, God is *further* Inclined: for we must not wrong Divine Goodness: For God was the first Mover. The Scripture tells us, *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son.* But this is materially Furthered, as by a Cause that doth externally move. For the first Impulsive Cause, that is God's own Goodness. This is according to Scripture ascribed to God, to the Divine Goodness in the *first place*; and the Sacrifice and intire Resignation of Christ in the *second Place*: And thus is God further moved, and inclined toward us, to Relieve, Compassionate, and Pardon us. And in respect of Man; he bids him be better advised, consider, give his Cause up, not to abide by it, deprecate God, return to Duty. We looking upon Christ as our Friend, one that undertakes to plead our Cause, and make the best of it; one that is ready to Relieve us: since he finds it necessary to lay down his Life in this cause; since he finds it necessary to yield all up to God, and to let God proceed as far as he pleases: shall we not hereby be effectually wrought upon to adore Divine Goodness? Shall we not be Affected by the Love of our Saviour? *Man* thus taking into Consideration the Death of Christ, He is persuaded in many things concerning God; as that he is Placable, and Reconcilable, and willing to admit the Sinner to Terms of Peace: And is hereby moved to Repentance, to disclaim whatsoever he hath done amiss; to look upon Sin as an ugly and an abominable thing: He is encouraged to Faith, Confidence, Trust and Repose in God. Disc. IV. Joh. 3. 16.

Thus doth he treat both Parties with *Arguments* fitting for the Case. It cannot but be so. Look upon these things in a way of Reason; and see what they offer to a Rational Agent, unless you will

Vol. III. will be brutiſh. For theſe things are Arguments to the Mind and Underſtanding of Men. So I have ſhewed you, how this Mediator doth affect *both Parties*. Conſiderable Matter is propoſed to both, which may prevail with the Party Offended to ſet down ſatisfied with that that he may have: And the Party Offending, to conſider and diſclaim what he hath done amiſs; Deprecate and return to Duty. And this is neceſſary; for if he do apply himſelf only to one Party, then he makes himſelf to be one of that Party.

3*dly*. The Reconciler doth *equally conſider* the *Right* of both Parties. Now there is a double Right, of a *Supream*, and of an *Owner*; the Right of Government, and the Right of Property. The Right of the Supream, that is *Service*: and the Right of *Property*, is payment of *Debt*, and Reſtitution in what hath been unduly taken. Now God hath both: For he is our Sovereign, and our Owner: for all we have, is his Talent committed to our Truſt. Now a Creditor hath as good a Demand, though the Debtor is non-ſolvent. God loſeth not the Right of his Demand, becauſe we are diſabled through our Apoſtaſie and contracted Impotency, no more than a Creditor loſeth his Right, becauſe his Debtor hath contracted Poverty and Neceſſity. It is true, among us, where a Man is fallen into Beggery, another doth in a manner loſe his Right, becauſe he is nothing the better; becauſe nothing is to be had. But if God ſhould deal with us according to his Rigour and Juſtice, he might make us miſerable, and rue the Day that ever we came into Being; and ſpend Eternity in fooling our ſelves, for departing from our Obedience. Now this is that that the Reconciler doth; while *Man* is an Apoſtate, and in Rebellion againſt God, he cannot give him Satisfaction; but he may do ſomething. Now the Reconciler accommodates himſelf

to

to the State of the Case, considers the Creditor's Right, and the Debtor's Necessity; and orders him to do that that he may; that is, make Acknowledgment to God, what he doth owe; to be sensible of his Unworthiness in that he hath given God Offence; to revoke by Repentance; to engage to do so no more; to ask God forgiveness, and to return to Duty. Doubtless the Reconciler will enjoyn every Sinner to do this, and this may be done. And then he will move *God* to abate of his Right, and to take what he may have from the Creature; that is, his own Justification, from the Mouth of him that is his Debtor. This is the least that the Offender can be enjoyned to do: And this being done, the Reconciler moves God to abate and accept. For the Reconciler is to deal equally; not to over-bear either Party; but in consideration of either Party, he enjoyns what is just and fit; and what the necessity of the Case will bear; so that the Parties may come off with as little Wrong as may be. The Necessity of the Case, and the Right of the Party, are the two things the Reconciler considers in his Endeavours for Peace. The Reconciler's Work must be, to convince the Offender of his Ungratefulness; and to offer something to the Offended to forgive. There must be a voluntary Submission of the Party Delinquent, and voluntary Remission of the Party offended. There must be free Forgiveness on God's Part: and ingenuous Submission on the Sinner's Part. What is forced upon us, is insignificant. If you punish a Malefactor till Doomsday, there is no satisfaction. So you see, that the Reconciler is to apply himself to the *State of the Case*, and to act as the Case doth require. He may be look'd upon as a Hinderer of Mens Rights, if in Matters of difference, he takes upon him to Lord it; If he doth not act fairly, and deal with both Parties, Disc. IV.

Vol. III. Parties, he is an Uſurper. And the Man that goes this way to work, he may chance to do more Wrong to One Party, it may be to Both, than was firſt given. Our Saviour takes care that God may come off with Honour; and that that may be done that is ſafe and beſt, by the Creature. And both theſe are attained by a juſt Propoſal that our Saviour makes; and they are done when the Sinner repents and God pardons. He doth conſider the Neceſſity of the Caſe, what it will bear; and this he finds fit, that God be Juſtified by the Sinner's Deprecation; and then he doth work the Sinner to Repentance. *By his own Sacrifice he doth perſuade God to Pardon*; and then he doth ſecure God's Honour: for it is acknowledged, *God hath Right*. The Caſe is rightly ſtated for God's Honour: and the Creature is brought to rights again. Truth is acknowledged; and God is juſtified.

4*thly*. The Reconciliation muſt be *Mutual*: Both Parties muſt be affected; both Parties muſt lay aſide Enmity. We fondly flatter our ſelves, if we think God is affected with the Interpoſition of the Reconciler, if we are not affected. Therefore if any think he may be reconciled to God by Chriſt his Performance, and is not otherwiſe affected in his own Mind to God and Goodneſs, than he was when he was in the State of Sin; this Man deceives himſelf, and lives in a Lye: For Chriſt doth as well affect us to God, as God to us. God muſt be moved to Compaſſion, and to abate of his Right; and the Creature muſt be brought to Repentance; to take his ways into conſideration, to renounce what he hath inſolently and arrogantly done, and wherein he hath miſbehaved himſelf toward his Lord and Owner; He is to bluſh and to be aſhamed, and to entertain Purpoſes of departing from Sin. Therefore if thou doſt not condemn thy ſelf in thy former

mer wicked Practiſes, thou art not affected as the Reconciler affects thoſe that he muſt bring home to God. And let Men think what they will, it is as ſure, as any thing is ſure, that Reconciliation is nothing to a Man till he is reconciled to God in Nature and Temper. This is indiſpenſably neceſſary. Do but conſider in References: Do not Referrees perſuade both Parties to middle Terms? And is there an end made of Strife till this be done, either by the Arguments of the Referrees, or by their Award? And this is the Work and Buſineſs of the Reconciler, to ſhew the Perſon offending, where he did baſely and unworthily; and bring him to repent: And to bring God to forgive where he cannot be repaired: and this is the way our Saviour takes. For Sin is ſuch an Offence againſt the Divine Majeſty, that it muſt be revoked by the Perſon's Ingenuity, and due Acknowledgment; Juſtifying God, and condemning himſelf. If we be not aſhamed of what we have done amiſs; if we do not repent and leave Sin, juſtifie God, and cry Mercy; the Agency of the Peace-maker hath not reached us. If theſe things be not, we are not relievable by Chriſt. For we are not to think that God is affected toward us, if we are not affected toward God. We are not to think, that God doth pardon any how: That is Faith that is only warranted by our Fancy, not by God. For Impenitents are not capable of God's Pardon. That God that gives Men Grace to repent, in his Goodneſs and Compaſſion; he hath no Pardon for thoſe that are Impenitent. I tell you, an impenitent Sinner, during his Impenitency, cannot be pardoned: For then God ſhould juſtifie Sin; he ſhould declare to the World, that the Rule of Right was nothing; he ſhould contradict himſelf, in maintaining an inſolent Creature in his variation from the Law of Righteouſneſs; which is the Law of God's Action, and the Law

Diſc. IV.

of

Vol. III. of God's Nature. It is impoſſible that ever we Mortals ſhould make Reparation to the Divine Majeſty, for the Affront we have put upon him, by our Diſloyalty and Diſobedience. Now how ſhall God and we be reconciled? No other way, but by making acknowledgment, and returning to Duty. But for him that lives in Sin, and loves Sin, he is not Partaker of Chriſt's Mediation: For a Reconciler loſeth his Labour, if both Parties lay not aſide their Emnity. Let God compaſſionate a miſerable Creature to the utmoſt Bounds of Compaſſion; yet this Compaſſion will not reach one that lives in Sin, and loves Sin; he is not in the leaſt degree an Object of Compaſſion, that hath not Remorſe for Sin. He is not a jot the better, that there is a Reconciler ſet up. There muſt of neceſſity be a Diſpoſition to return, and to ſubmit to the Terms of Agreement, on the Delinquent Party's ſide; as well as a Condeſcention on the wronged Party's ſide. Thoſe that are obſtinate Sinners, they may know that the Reconciliation doth not reach them at all: For they are the ſame in reſpect of the Rule of Righteouſneſs, and to God and Goodneſs, as they were before. They are like a dark Body, not acted with the Sun becauſe the Light is not received. How can it be that thoſe that are Obdurate and Impenitent in Sin, how can it be but that they muſt unavoidably periſh, ſince they are left by Chriſt after his dealing with them, as Reprobate, Malignant, Contumacious, Rebellious, Untractable, Unmalleable Matter? The Mediator falls ſhort of his Purpoſe, where either Party will not ſubmit to Terms of Agreement; if either Party prove inflexible, will not yield to Reaſon: For it is no Reconciliation, if it be not Mutual. If Sinners be not affected, they are not ſo far wrought upon, that an Argument may be brought to move God toward them. For do you think that this Argument

gument will do? This is a Man that lives in Sin, and ſtands upon his Juſtification; he is reſolved to do the like he hath done; is altogether unalterable; no Argument will reach him: This is the Repreſentation the Reconciler muſt make. And judge ye, what effect this will have. Now if Salvation be brought about in a way of Reconciliation; they may be ſure they are out of the way of Happineſs that live in Sin. Are they ingenuouſly wrought upon and affected? Are they good Natured to God? If not, there is Repugnancy. Here is Goodneſs on the one ſide indeed; but there is Wickedneſs prevailing in the Creature, and he cannot be brought to ſubmit: How can theſe be brought together? They cannot be conjoyned: Goodneſs and Wickedneſs cannot meet; they cannot be reconciled. In the one, God doth excel; and in the other, the Sinner perſiſts, and it cannot be ſubdued. God cannot be reconciled to Evil, and Unrighteouſneſs, Wilfulneſs in Sin, and Incorrigibleneſs: And, to love Sin, and to allow a Man's ſelf to live in Sin; and to be in the ſame State he was in before, ſo that no change is wrought upon him by the Reconciler, but that he leaves him as he finds him; let me ſay it (without Diſparagement) it is not a Matter worthy of God to pardon ſuch. God ſhould do that, that were not Good, if he ſhould forgive Sin to thoſe that live in Sin, and allow themſelves in Sin: ſuch Men are not capable of being made Happy by God himſelf; they would jarr in Heaven, and be Miſerable under the Communications of God, becauſe not Reconciled to Him in Mind and Temper. For unleſs Sin be put away, God and We ſhall never be at Terms of Agreement; and ſo, never Happy by God: For there is no Happineſs by things that are not at an Agreement. This is the fourth Head; Reconciliation is to be *Mutual*; both Parties are to be Affected.

Disc. IV.

5thly.

5*thly.* Reconciliation is a thing highly *Pleaſing* to each Party; both Parties ſatisfied in it: and the Reconciler ſhall be thanked, and Bleſſed to Eternity.

1. Acceptable on *Man's Part.*

2. On *God's Part.*

1*ſt.* On *Man's* Part. In reſpect of Man; he is enjoyned nothing, but what is Juſt, fit and equal; yea, what is Beſt in it ſelf. Nothing but to be in a Capacity of Happineſs: To be like God: To lay aſide the Deviliſh Nature he was in by Envy and Malice: To lay aſide the Brutiſh Nature of Senſuality; and to be like God: It is beſt in it ſelf. Job. 33. 27. 28. *God looks upon Men, and if any one ſay, I have tranſgreſſed, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; He will deliver his Soul from going into the Pit, and his Life ſhall ſee the Light. It is meet that it ſhould be ſaid unto the Lord, I have tranſgreſſed:* Nothing in the World doth ſo much eaſe a Conſcience ſtung with Guilt, as deprecation. There needs but one thing more to a full Juſtification; and that is, God's Forgiving. In the Tears of a Penitent that is ſenſible of the Unworthineſs of Sin, there is more of real ſatisfaction than in all the Pleaſure of Sin: For there is Hearts-eaſe and ſatisfaction conſequent upon it. The caſe of a Sinner is made Compaſſionable, when he doth repent; before he doth Repent it is not Compaſſionable. If there be not Repentance ſubſequent upon Tranſgreſſion, the Caſe is not compaſſionable. It is the greateſt Satisfaction in the World to think, that Divine Goodneſs will commiſerate a compaſſionable Caſe. But there muſt be Remorſe, and Deprecating God's Diſpleaſure; Converſion and turning to God, this makes the Caſe of a Sinner compaſſionable. It is true, a Creature being but a Creature, and at the beſt Finite and Fallible, it is very poſſible he may Tranſgreſs: but it is expected, if he

he doth Transgress, that he should disown it, and Return to Duty, and do a second time That that is Right. It is the only way that a Sinner hath, to Revoke and Void what is done amiss; It is a Moral Revocation; it is as much as a Man's blotting out what is written amiss; for no Man takes notice of it in reading the Writing. And this is the Gospel; immediately upon Repentance, Remission of Sins. On *our Part*, who are Delinquents, Reconciliation is grateful and Acceptable, highly pleasing, Easeth our Minds, quiets our Spirits. True, I have done amiss, but I have condemned my self for it; I will never do the like. I now stand to God's Courtesie; I hope, according to the Tenour of the Gospel, He will Remit: For a Creditor may Remit a Debt that is due to him; so God may Remit the Punishment of a Sinner. God is the Creditor of Punishment that is due upon Sin. He hath the Right of Abating, as well as the Right of Inflicting. And the Penitent doth an ingenuous and worthy Act. How do we commend a Person, if he hath done amiss, when he comes and Deprecates his Offence? we look upon him to be a Hard Man that will not comply with him, and Pardon him. Thus a Man makes his case compassionable. And then, Disc. IV. Lu. 24. 27.

2. On *God's part*, it is acceptable: because God had a Mind to save his Creature from the beginning; and this antecedently to Christ's coming. For though Reconciliation was wrought by Christ, it was contrived by the Wisdom and Goodness of God. His Goodness did move God to find out a way. He had it first in his Thoughts. It is the Glorious product of Infinite Wisdom and Goodness in Conjunction. And if it be lawful to compare God's Works with one another, it is a far more Glorious Work to Reclaim a Lapsed Creature, than to make a Creature out of nothing: for there is nothing so much of Goodness in it. To make

that

Vol. III. that that was Miſerable, Happy; is the Work of infinite Grace, and Goodneſs, and Compaſſion.

Thus you ſee the Buſineſs of Reconciliation is both Acceptable to *God* and *Man*. To God, becauſe God's Honour is maintained, and becauſe infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs have therein exerciſed themſelves. And to *Man*, becauſe Man is put upon nothing but what is Beſt in itſelf; that a Man if he did but conſider, he would not be Saved in another way. And Man now is out of danger; and looks upon God as his Friend: And God delights in this his Product, infinite Wiſdom and Goodneſs together; which is tranſcendent to that productive Power of creating Something out of Nothing. This is the repreſentation I make you concerning the *Matter* of *Reconciliation*.

I will now ſpeak of the *Manner* of Reconciliation; and ſhew you what our Saviour in our behalfe did Undertake, that was highly pleaſing and Satisfactory to the Mind of God; and according to his Will; and therefore it was true manner of Reconciliation: And when you ſee this perform'd, your Faith will be Rational, and you will ſay, That the Contrivance of the Goſpel, as it is a contrivance of infinite Goodneſs, ſo of infinite Wiſdom. And great Reaſon there is, we ſhould have Conſolation in Believing.

There was in the Performance of our Saviour many fitting *Acknowledgments* in reſpect of Humane Nature: The Relation that Humane Nature ſtands in to God; the Title and Tenour thereof: There were many Fitting things done in reſpect of this; and many fitting things done ſaving Gods Honour; and ſaving the Rule of Righteouſneſs. For a Fitting way to ſave Sinners in, is beſt upon All accounts. God doth it in a way of infinite Goodneſs, and becoming infinite Wiſdom; and the beſt way for the Creature; though

we

we Mortals look but at some particular things, and do act carelesly, not securing all Ends; whereby we find cause to Revoke and Repent; which is occasioned partly by our Incogitancy, and partly because we are not further capable. But infinite Wisdom doth not do so. Whence it comes to pass, that Repentance, which is our best Security, hath no place in God at all: For all the ways of God are Righteousness, Holiness, and Truth. This for the *General*: But more particularly in six things. Disc. IV.

First, Concerning the Quality of *Sin*. Here is a Declaration of its Filthiness and Unworthiness; its Odiousness in the sight of God; its ill Demerit; its Hurtfulness to the Creature; for it destroys the Subject, and is a pernicious Example. Now it is Fit that the Person to be Restored be made sensible of his Condition; and what the Phisician hath done for him. These four things concerning the *Quality of Sin* are declared. That it hath in it all *Impurity*; there is no natural Corruption hath in it that degree of Naughtiness and Impurity, that Moral Impurity hath: For in Moral Turpitude there is that that is of Spiritual Impurity. And then its *Odiousness to God*; it is loathsome, abominable, and detestable in the Eyes of God: For it is contrary to his Nature, and contrary to his Mind and Will. And then it is of *Ill demerit*. For whereas God delights to do his Creature good, this provokes God to turn from his Creature. And then the *Hurtfulness* of Sin; destructive to the Doer, and a bad President. Now these things are Acknowledged in Christ's death: For He having Undertaken the Defence of our Cause, or to Apologize for it, if it were capable; He finds that it was not to be defended, or Apologized for: And therefore gives it up. And this is for God's Honour, and the countenance of Righteousness.

Secondly, In reſpect of the Law, four things were done by Chriſt's Undertaking. (1.) *God's* unqueſtionable *Right* to make Laws depending on his own Will and Pleaſure. (2.) The *Neceſſity* of ſuch Laws that are in themſelves Good, and founded in the Relation the Creature ſtands in to God. (3.) The Reaſon and *Equity* of All theſe Laws. And (4.) Man is bound in *Subjection* to them. All theſe things are Acknowledged by our Saviour's Undertaking.

(1.) That God hath an unqueſtionable *Right* as our Lord and Owner, to impoſe upon us a *Law* depending upon his own Will; to confine and limit the Creature in the Uſe of his Liberty. And if God in the uſe of his Soveraignty, do impoſe a Law upon the Creature, the Creature is bound to Obey; and to ſubmit to God's Pleaſure in this Law. God may impoſe; and when he will, he may alter, and Void that Law again: And this is God's right, to uſe his Authority. Now this Authority was trampled upon and derided by *Adam's* Inſolency, to eat of the forbidden Fruit, God unconſulted, not intreated, or begged Leave of; but upon Confederacy with an evil Spirit, which was a bold practiſe upon God. Now if Men may do this, and hear nothing from their Governour, it is a kind of conſenting to the Violation of the Law; and is this Fit for God to do? Not to Chaſtiſe this inſolent Creature, or declare his Power and Authority?

(2.) That there are Laws that are *ſuo jure*; where the *Reaſon of the thing* doth require; the quality of the thing doth Eſtabliſh them: and this is the Law of Man's Creation. That that Creature which derives from God; ſhould Acknowledge God; and thus the Creature that is Intelligent and Voluntary, ſhould ſend up to God a free Will Offering. There are Laws in matters that are indifferent: there are Laws alſo in neceſſary Matters, where there can

be

be no dispensation: I will shew you the difference. Disc. IV.
That Man was prohibited to eat of the Fruit of such a Tree; is not necessary in it self; but if God will Prohibit, Man is to be Subject to the Will of God. But then for *Necessary Laws*; this is in it self due and Indispensable, That a Creature that is capable of God, Observe, Obey, and Love God; he being endued with Understanding; that he make Acknowledgment of God in the Use of his Reason, to discern his Will; and, being thus capable, he must choose the Good and avoid the evil. Now *Adam* failed in both: for he was bound by his Faculties of Reason and Understanding, and the Powers of Liberty and Freedom, to Love God. And do you think that had the Love of God ruled in his Heart, he would ever have broken the former Law? So that *Adam* was a double Sinner. (1.) *Immoral*; the fear of God was not before his Eyes, nor the love of God ruled in his Heart. And, (2.) he was a *Rebel*. Now, is it fit that our Saviour should Overlook such things as these? No. It is fit He should bring Man to see wherein he hath done amiss, and Return and Repent; and submit to God. And this he doth himself; He submits to God, having Undertaken Man's cause, and dyes for it: for there was nothing to be said for Man's condition. And then,

(3.) That there is *Reason* and *Equity* in both these Laws; because our Saviour doth establish *Both* these Laws. For if there had been any thing to have been alledged, why a Creature should not love, fear and obey God, our Saviour might have done it: But in that he doth not, he doth acknowledge the Justice, Reason, and Sanctity of these Laws.

(4.) That Man is bound in *Subjection* to them All. The *Law of God's Creation*, a Law of Righteousness, Truth, and Holiness, Just, Holy, Fit, and

Vol. III. Knowable by Natural Light. And then all *Voluntary Prohibitions*, all theſe ought to ſtand; this is acknowledged. For elſe there would have been ſome Defence: But our Saviour, that bore as high Goodwill, and did, to the beſt of his Underſtanding, make the beſt of our Cauſe, hath nothing to ſay againſt the Right of God, to make a Law. But in that he doth ſubmit to the Penalty, and doth ſet himſelf to move God to Compaſſion, and to paſs the Sin by, and indulge to the Sinner the Grace of Repentance: He acknowledgeth all theſe four things: For by Man's Diſobedience, all theſe are called in queſtion; and therefore they need a Reinforcement by ſome Acknowledgment, and Revocation: And this is done by our great Undertaker.

Thirdly. An *open Condemnation of Sin* is requiſite and fitting in this Caſe of the Creatures Exorbitancy and wilful Practice upon God; and to be for ever hereafter a *Check* and Controul upon all Luſts. And this is remarkably done by our Saviour, ſince *He died for Sin*. This arrogant Practice of the Creature is ſufficiently witneſſed againſt; ſince an Innocent Perſon hath died for it. The Son of God, when he comes to do away Sin, finds it neceſſary to lay down his Life. Is it not a baſe and unworthy thing, that cannot be done away in a leſs way? And doth not this look Backward, and condemn what Man hath done; and look Forward, and Reſtrain Luſt and Sin, for all time to come? So that this being in it ſelf worthy, is ſatisfactory to God; and the Pardon of Sin is thereby facilitated.

Fourthly, Owning *God as Supream* and *Sovereign*; and owning the *Rule of Right*, is done in the *very Nature* that had tranſgreſſed. Here is Reparation and Satisfaction made to *God*, as Supream and Sovereign; as Owner, and as Ruler and Governour,

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in Christ's Acknowledgment, and submitting the Cause to God's Mercy. And then there is also Reparation to the *Rule of Right*, which is the Law of the Creation, and Life of the Universe: And this is done in that very Nature in which the Offence was given: So that the great Prejudice, by the former bold Practice, is taken off by the second *Adam*'s doing the quite contrary. Disc. IV

Fifthly, There is Demonstration of *God's Veracity and Holiness.* He had given out Prohibition under the Penalty of Death: He had denounced, *In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die the death.* Gen. 2. 17. And this is fulfilled in the very Letter. One doth die upon the occasion of Sin, that could overcome Death: See here the Word of God stands. God's Holiness and Impartiality is declared; and this is according to the Mind and Will of God; and a Matter that is acceptable, is always Matter of Satisfaction.

Lastly, He brings things *to rights again.* That is done by our Saviour's Undertaking. Man is brought to rights. God follows the Creature with his Blessings. The Curse is taken off, and God returns to Blessing; and he hath Blessed Man ever since. The Passage is open to our free Communication with God. God and Man at difference: Man is Disloyal, and God provoked and offended. God is affected to return to Blessing, and Man to Duty. Here is an Acknowledgment, that God hath been Wronged, that Obedience was due to God: The Creature condemned in his Misbehaviour: A Justification of Right, an Acknowledgment of the Creature's Submission, Obedience, and intire Resignation to God. Here is bringing things back; whereas all things were brought into Confusion by the Apostasie. Whereas there had been an Inlet of Evil, that had ruined and mischieved the World; here is a way found out to

ſtop the Current of Man's Sin; and to bring in Divine Goodneſs and Loving-kindneſs. Man's Sin is pardoned; Guilt is taken off from the Conſcience; Puniſhment prevented; God is pacified; and the Sinner diſcharged.

All this have I repreſented to you, to ſhew you there was *grateful Matter* in our Saviour's Undertaking; which was Matter tending to ſatisfie *God*, acceptable to him, and further inclined him to Grace and Favour. Alſo Matter highly ſatisfactory to the Mind of *Man*. Here is an Intimation of Divine Clemency, Benignity, Compaſſion. Here it is made out, that which could but be hoped that it was ſo; 'tis now confirmed, that God is placable and reconcilable. So that our Saviour doth bring about Reconciliation, by doing things pleaſing and acceptable to God. And all theſe Things are Fitting in the Caſe, and becoming Man. For you know, though we are freely juſtified by Grace, yet Grace doth admit Fitting things to be done; and theſe Fitting things are neceſſary, and Grace is no leſs, notwithſtanding theſe Fitting things to be done. For it doth juſtifie the Rule of Right, which is the Life of the Univerſe; reflects honourably upon God; juſtifies the Law, as being Good, Juſt, Right, and Equal: Alſo good for the Creature; for it tends to bring him back again to a Creature-State, which is Humility and Modeſty: Humility, as Creatures; Modeſty, as Sinners. Now ſee what follows this Interpoſition of our Saviour and Lord: Sin is pardoned, the Sinner repenting is diſcharged, and a Foundation laid of Repentance. This for Explication of the *Manner* of bringing about the Reconciliation.

But yet a little further; that I may make you ſee how you are beholden to our Saviour for his Undertaking. Now that our Saviour did deſign, and intend, and comprehend all theſe Noble Ends, this doth

doth declare the great Worthiness of our Saviour's Undertaking, and makes it Reasonable Service; which is the highest Improvement of the Noblest Faculty. For the highest Angel in Glory cannot act higher, than to perform to God Intelligent and Reasonable Service. I repeat it again; In what Christ did and suffered; this doth express the great Worthiness of our Saviour's *Sacrifice*, and makes it a *Reasonable Service*. For that that made the Sacrifice of Christ so transcendently above the Death of Ten Thousands of Beasts, was because all these were but meerly Passive: And our Saviour did understand and mean all these Noble Ends: This made our Saviour's Sacrifice so highly excellent and transcendent. For that that makes an Undertaking excellent is, that it is undertaken in a way of the truest *Reason*, the highest *Intelligence*; and in a way of actual *Intention*, of Sublime and Noble Ends; and that voluntarily and unconstrained: And this is signal in our Saviour's Sacrifice. And this never was in the Beast in the *Mosaical Sacrifices*; but in our Saviour, all these things were eminently. And things that fail of these Ingredients, fall short of Worth. The actual Intention of God's Honour, establishing Right, recovering the Law of the Universe, and repairing so excellent a Creature as Man was, who was lost: It is the Noblest End that ever was design'd. Never was the Creation parallell'd but by this Reparation. The acting of the Rational Part of the World doth far transcend the Motion of all the Natural Actions in the World; for all these are rather Acted, than Act. It is the Intelligent and Voluntary Agents that do act out of Foresight, and in the Use of Liberty and Freedom. Now our Saviour being highly Intelligent, and fully Voluntary, did in his Understanding, design and aim at all these Ends, which are so Honourable for God; so fitting Disc. IV.

Vol. III. for the Purpoſe, and ſo good for Man. As he was apprehenſive of them, ſo he was free in all that he did: He did it with all his Soul. Therefore is the Sacrifice of Chriſt ſo highly acceptable, and every way for our Advantage. And therefore we may look upon the Buſineſs of our Reconciliation being in ſo good a Hand, not only feaſible, but right and effectual.

And Oh! that this Conſideration might but enter into your ſerious Thoughts, and make you careful to avoid any new Offence. Reconciliation brought about in ſo extraordinary a way; in a way that no Wiſdom, leſs than God's, could have found out: And ſhall we ſin again! Shall any thing be a ſufficient Provocation to Sin? Shall we do our ſelves ſo great a Miſchief? Shall we ſlight Sin? Shall we Sin upon eaſie Terms again. Shall we incur God's Diſpleaſure a ſecond time? Oh, take care of *this:* For to Sin after Reconciliation, ſeems to be an irrecoverable thing.

DIS-

DISCOURSE V.

The Mediation of Christ, the Grand Institution of God.

COL. 3. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

I Have insisted upon the great *Benefits* that we believing in Christ, receive by Him; The great Good that God intended to Mankind, in the Gift of his Son.

Now I think fit in the next place, to shew what *Use* we are to make of *Christ*. What he hath done for Us, we have heard; what use we are to make of him, you are now to Hear. To which purpose, I have pitched upon this place of Scripture; which is a Text remarkable, and doth contain matter, which otherwise than by Revelation, could never have been known. It is matter most acceptable to Man's Mind and Understanding. A Man might have thought thousands of Years, and never have thought of this way. If *God* be the great *End*, *Christ* is the *Means* to the End; for Christ is *the way, the Truth, and the Life.* Joh. 14. 6.

The Words will engage your Attention, if you consider four things.

1. The *high Import* of the Matter. A choice piece of Revealed Truth, of making Use of the *Name of Christ* in our Addresses and Approaches unto

unto God. It is (as I may ſay) a Superinduction upon the Principles of God's Creation, a thing Tranſcendent to it. It is a Supplementary Proviſion of Grace. For Man having loſt himſelf, and having made void his Intereſt and Acceſs to God, becauſe of his diſloyalty; is Warranted to make Uſe of a Name, whereby he is to gain Acceſs to God.

2. It is a point of moſt *Ordinary Practice*; not only to make Uſe of Him in ſome particular Caſes; but always to be put in uſe, and in all Caſes. Therefore we muſt be well informed in it; for we can do nothing without this Knowledge: Not ſo much as ſay, *I thank God*, without either mentioning the Name of *Chriſt* in Word, or in Thought. Nothing is acceptable wherein Chriſt is not named. Every Body is willing to receive Thanks: Yet the Apoſtle doth not only ſay, *whatſoever you Do or Think*; but that, which every Body will receive for its own ſake, *Giving of Thanks*: *That* muſt be done *in the Name of Chriſt.*

3. It is that which is the *proper Apoſtacy* of the Latter Ages of the World; whereof we are to admoniſh, to take ſpecial notice of; that is the Falſification of this Truth. And this is a great point: I ſhall reſerve it for hereafter: Here I only mention it; to ſhew of what import the matter before us is.

4. This hath been in God's Heart to ſpeak from the *beginning*. Whenſoever he was well pleaſed, then he hath let drop ſomething more of this matter. *God who* formerly *at ſundry Times and in divers Manners* (ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*) *ſpake to the Fathers by the Prophets, has in theſe Goſpel Days ſpoken out-right*; *ſpoken* his heart fully, *by his Son*. *Theſe* are the *four* general conſiderations of the Words, and the *Matter* of the Words; The Words in themſelves, are the *Goſpel-Inſtitution*; and there

Heb. 1. 1, 2. πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως.

is

is nothing elſe but what is part and parcel of this, that is of divine *Inſtitution*. The *Law of the Creation*, that is Antecedent; This is the only *Superaddition*: This we are to know, as we Love our ſelves; as we would ſave our Souls. With this I will compare nothing; for there is nothing elſe that is Revealed in Scripture, that muſt not veil to it. Diſc. V.

I will now produce you Scriptures, that ſpeak to the Senſe of this Scripture; for a Scripture to this Fulneſs, we have none elſe; but Scriptures that ſpeak to the ſame point, we have divers. *Whatſoever ye ſhall aſk the Father in my Name, He will give it you. Hitherto ye have aſked nothing in my Name.* Hitherto my Name hath not been known in the World, ſo as I intend it ſhall hereafter be. The *Jews* could not call God Father in *Chriſt*, as we do; even thoſe that were juſt before him; even *John the Baptiſt* did not know him as we know him. Therefore it is ſaid, *He that is leaſt in the Kingdom of Heaven, is greater then John the Baptiſt. Hitherto you have aſked nothing in my Name*; henceforth aſk in my Name, and *it ſhall be given to you. You believe in God*, that was from the beginning; now the Inſtitution is, *Believe alſo in me.* There is a plain and full declaration, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, i. e.* I am the true and living Way. Theſe places of Scripture do Concurr with the Words of the *Text*; though all of them are ſhort of it: Therefore, as I ſaid before, This is the main *Inſtitution* in the day of the Goſpel. And we are not under the Power of any, by virtue of bare Inſtitution as Obligatory upon Conſcience, but *this* and its Ingredients; particular Concomitants and Appurtenances: And this is Goſpel-Liberty: And whoſoever Underſtands this, may have a clear mind, when Others have a diſturb'd and doubting Conſcience.

Joh. 16. 23, 24.

Matt. 11. 11.

Joh. 14. 1.

Act. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 3. 11.

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It is the *Grand Inſtitution* of God; the great Proviſion of Heaven. It muſt not be an empty and a ſhallow thing, therefore we muſt enquire what we muſt do *in the Name of the Lord Jeſus.*] I ſhall ſhew you in ſix or ſeven particulars.

1. *In the Name*, ſometimes ſignifies *for the ſake.* Matt 10. 41. *He that receives a Prophet in the Name of a Prophet*; *i. e.* for the ſake of a Prophet, upon a Prophet's account: *And he that receives a Righteous Man, in the Name of a Righteous Man*, that is as ſuch. A Man may happen upon that which is Right; or do that which is good out of baſe Reſpects. *In the Name* therefore is *for the ſake.*

2. *In the Name*, is ſometimes uſed for *in the Authority*, or by the Commiſſion of ſuch an One. Jam. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 5. 4. 2 Th. 3. 6. Act. 16. 18. The Apoſtle *in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, delivers up* the great Sinner to *Satan. We command you, Brethren, in the Name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that ye withdraw your ſelves from every Brother that walketh diſorderly.* It is ſaid unto the unclean Spirit, *I command you, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to come out of her.* Where Chriſt's Authority is warranted. Our Saviour himſelf ſaith, *I am come in my Father's Name, i. e.* by the Appointment of God. John. 5. 43. Matt. 7. 22. *We have propheſied in thy Name*, &c. and ſo we frequently uſe the Word: *I require you in the King's Name.* So, in the Name of God, imports God's Authority.

3. *In the Name*, is *in the* mention and *Acknowledgment.* Matt. 28. 19. So, I underſtand that place, *Baptizing in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt.* If in the Name of God *only*, I ſhould have thought it had been in the *Authority*: but being in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, I take it to be in *Acknowledgment.* So we uſe the Name of Chriſt in the uſe of Bread and Wine, mentioning him, and Acknowledging him.

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4. *In the* Name, ſignifies *Right*, *Title*, Poſſeſſion, Intereſt for the Uſe. It ſignifies *in the Right*, *Title*, as *I have kept them in thy Name, and not one of them is loſt.* I have kept them as thy Poſſeſſion, in thy Name, *i. e.* for thy Uſe, and as maintaining thy Poſſeſſion, intimating God to be Owner and Proprietor. Joh. 17. 12.

5. *In the Name*, is *in the ſtead.* So we have this form of Words alſo uſed; *It is expedient that I go away, that the Comforter may come, whom God will ſend in my Name*; that is, in my ſtead and room, to ſupply my place, and carry on my Work. Joh. 16. 7. Joh. 14. 26.

6. *In the Name*, is in the *Aſſiſtance.* *David* ſaith to *Goliah*, *I come to thee in the Name of the Lord of Hoſts*, *i. e.* at God's Pleaſure, at God's Appointment, in God's Aſſiſtance; as Enabled by God to conquer and ſubdue thee. *I come to thee in the Name of God:* So *we go out in the Name of God*, when we go out in God's Strength, looking upon our ſelves as endued with God's Power; for where the Lord is, there is Strength. We go in his Name when we have Dependance upon him for his Bleſſing: This is *in the Name of God.* 1 Sam. 17. 45.

7. Which I prefer, for the preſent Caſe, above all the reſt, tho' we need not leave the other out: *Do all in the Name, i. e. Acceptance of God, giving thanks in the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* Our Perſons are accepted of God in Chriſt. *Aſk in my Name*: Make uſe of my Merit, and you ſhall obtain, by my Procurement; you ſhall have upon my Account. We go to God in the Name of Chriſt; we go to God by Him, as the Procurer of our Acceptance. If a Perſon ſtand in need of ſuch a Great Man's Favour, One directs him to apply himſelf to him in his Name, *Go in my Name.* So that *Chriſt* is to us the way of Acceſs to God, and the Procurer of all our Acceptance. Chriſt is the only Meritorious Cauſe. God does acknowledge Eph. 5. 20. Joh. 14. 13.

Vol. III. ledge that none deſerves of him, but Chriſt alone. When we go to God in confidence of Chriſt's Intereſt with God; then we make Uſe of Chriſt's Name;

1 Pet. 2. 5. *Acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* Where he ſpeaks of a Religious Worſhip, a Goſpel-Service, that

Phil. 3. 9. which is Worthy; he cloſeth all, *Acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* So, *not having our own Righteouſneſs, but the Righteouſneſs that is in God through Faith, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt.* We pray to God to Accept us in Chriſt; and Deal with us, not for our own ſakes, but for his Mercy ſake in Jeſus Chriſt. We put our Lives and Cauſe in his Hands; make Him our only Mediator. And in this ſenſe I will mainly conſider the Words: So this notion is held forth in the Words, That Chriſt is *immediate* in the Eye of our Faith, in all our Religious Worſhip. God is Final, and Chriſt is Me-

1 Pet. 1. 21. dium. Chriſt is between God and us. *We go to God by Chriſt*; and we Underſtand none to be between us and God, but Chriſt. Our Service of God we account is made Worthy, and Acceptable to God, by paſſing through Chriſt's Hands. The great

Rev. 8. 3. Angel, who is *the Angel of the Covenant*, is ſaid to have *Incenſe* of his Own to *Offer, with the Prayers of the Saints.* Chriſt puts in the Incenſe, when thou makeſt Uſe of Him as a Mediator in thy Prayers to God. This we ſhould take care of, that in all our Application to God, all our Sacrifices, that they ſhould be brought to the Mediator, that they ſhould have the happy Mixture, that they may be rendred to God acceptable, and a ſweet-ſmelling Savour. Chriſt offers them, not as they come out of our Hands; Oh, they are ſhort and Unworthy! But He joyns Incenſe with them. All the Gifts and Graces of God, are the Conſequence of our Saviour's Death, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion. Our Sin is Pardoned in his Death; our Conſciences cleanſed from Guilt in his Blood. Our Hearts

Sprinkled

Sprinkled with his Blood *from an Evil Conſcience.* Diſc. V.

You ſee now what we conclude upon to be the beſt Explication of theſe Words: *Do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, &c. There *is no other Name* Act. 4. 12. *under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved.* And, *other* 1 Cor. 3. *Foundation can no Man lay, than that is laid, which is* 11. *Jeſus Chriſt. Great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs. God* 1 Tim. 3. *was manifeſt in the Fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit*; *i. e.* 19. by the extraordinary Effects of the Spirit, which in thoſe Days were done: As the Voice from Heaven, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed,* Mar. 1. 11. *hear ye him.* He had Atteſtation and Ratification from thoſe Works of the Spirit.

Theſe Words are by you highly to be regarded; becauſe by theſe God ſpeaks to you further than his Creation went in the Moment that he made Man; For none of this Knowledge was in Paradiſe; *Adam* in Innonce had not the leaſt touch of it.

And again: Here God ſpeaks to you, as the the Phyſician of your Souls: He conſiders your Spiritual Malady: He takes notice of the Apoſtacy of *Adam*, and the Degeneracy of all Mortals, through a Participation and Imitation of him. In which State, if God had taken no notice of us, we had all periſhed everlaſtingly. Have an open Ear to receive and underſtand this further Teaching of God; and beware you Miſtake not, nor miſcarry in it. Herein lies the Characteriſtick, the Difference between Men. This is the Spiritual Point; theſe are *the Followers of the Lamb*; and they that have Rev. 14. 4. theſe Directions, and follow their own Inventions, theſe are the *Worſhippers of the Beaſt*; and with Rev. 13. 4. him at laſt to be puniſhed in the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone, which burns for ever. Conſider therefore this Scripture, which is the Sum of the whole Scripture; the utmoſt of God's revealing himſelf to Man in the State of Grace. If you fail here, there

Vol. III. there is no Recovery for you; unless you do expect that Christ should appear again a second time, to make a second Sacrifice.

To do in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, is to do in his *Acceptance*: When we understand, that both our Persons and Service, are tendered to God by Christ's Mediation, and accepted of God upon Christ's Account; and we our selves accepted, as the Adoption of his Grace. For there is no other way of Acceptance with God for fallen Man, but through Christ; by Christ only we are Recommended.

I have given you abundance of Scriptures to make this out unto you. And the Truth is, our great danger is Presumption, glorying in our own Wisdom, Power, Wealth, and Greatness. Not any Merit of ours upon our own account: *Christ* ought to be immediate in the Eye of our Faith, in our Approaches to God: And *God* is to be Ultimate and Final. Fallen and Apostate Man needs a *Mediator of Reconciliation.* Man that is cloathed in Sin, needs something to shadow him before the pure Deity. Therefore we approach God by Divinity having taken upon him Humane Nature; renouncing Presumption, Self-confidence; and, depending wholly upon God's Grace, Courtesie, Kindness; That he will accept us upon the account of his Son. And this is *to do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus*: Which I will farther lay out in several Propositions.

1. Christ hath signified the *Means of acceptance ever since the first Promise.* There is of necessity to be a Reconciler, between God offended, and Man offending. If *without Christ*, *without God in the World.* Through Sin we are so Unworthy, that God doth even turn us out of his Presence. We cannot go to God without Presumption, but as he is Reconciled in Christ. Had not this been declared;

Eph. 2. 12.

clared; inſtead of that Scripture, *God ſent his only Son into the World, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life*; we might have read that of the Apoſtate *Angels*. It hath been the great Buſineſs of God, from the very firſt convicting of *Adam* and *Eve* in Sin, to declare to them *Chriſt*: and he doth it ſometimes more, and ſometimes leſs. When ever he would gratifie the World, he doth declare ſomething of Chriſt. I will run through the whole Bible; whereby you will have Aſſurance of this Truth: And you will be led to conſider, that it is the main thing that God hath intended. For never did God more gratifie the World, than by making ſome further Exhibition of Chriſt, or ſome more ample Declaration. The firſt is, *The Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's Head*: Theſe Words are exactly explained by St. *John*. *To this purpoſe was the Son of God manifeſt, that he might deſtroy the Works of the Devil.* The next is, the Promiſe made to *Abraham*. *In thy Seed ſhall all the Families of the Earth be bleſſed.* *Bleſſed* there, is Juſtified; Juſtified from Sin. Again, you have Adumbration of Chriſt to be the way to God, by a *Ladder reaching from Earth to Heaven*: and this is a Ladder by which there is a Deſcent from Heaven to Earth, and Aſcent from Earth to Heaven. This was undoubtedly a Repreſentation of Divinity inhabiting humane Nature. Again, you have an intimation of the Circumſtances of the Time, wherein God would exhibit the *Meſſias*. He ſpeaks nothing of it before: *The Scepter ſhall not depart from* Judah *until* Shiloh *come*. This Text the *Jews* take a great deal of pains to Diſannul, though all in Vain. That about the Time when the *Jewiſh* Nation ſhould ceaſe to have Government in their own Hands, about that time, God would ſend the *Meſſias*; and ſo it was. The next is the great Propheſie, where *Moſes* ſpeaks thus: *The Lord*

Diſc. V.

Joh. 3. 16.

2 Pet. 2. 4.

Gen 3. 16.

1 Joh. 3. 8.

Gen. 22. 18.

Gen. 28. 12.

Gen. 49. 10.

Deut. 18. 15.

thy God will raise up unto the a Prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. That Christ is meant by this Scripture, you have a place of Scripture in St. *John*, where the Words are repeated and applied to Christ: and by St. *Peter* also they are twice repeated and applied to Christ. Now after this, see in the whole Time of the Mosaical Pedagogy; and Christ was the true Substance of all; the Ceremonies were the Shadows, and Christ was the Virtue: For this you have the whole Epistle to the *Hebrews*; but particularly *Cap.* 9. The *Scape-Goat* was a Representation of Christ. First they laid Hands upon the Scape-goat, confessing their Sins; then sent him into the Wilderness, where he should either be starved with Hunger, or devoured by Wild-Beasts: Or as the *Jews* superad, thrown down a Rock and broke in pieces. The next is the *Serpent of Brass.* Those that are stung with or by the Serpent of Sin, look up to Christ and are relieved. *Aaron* was Christ's Proxy, stood in his stead: The *Tabernacle* and the *Ark* was the Representation of Divinity beginning to Inhabit in Humanity. In the times of the Prophets, you have far clearer Light than any yet. *A Virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a Son,* &c. *Unto us a Child is Born. And there shall come forth a Rod out of the Stem of Jesse. Behold my Servant whom I uphold. I will give thee for a Light unto the Gentiles.* These two Promises declare our Saviour's Business, that he should not only serve the Interest of that particular Commonwealth, but be given to all Nations. *And the desire of all Nations shall come.* Another you have in *Jonah* being three days and three nights in the Whale's Belly, as our Saviour himself doth explicate that matter. Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts saying, *Behold the Man whose Name is the Branch, and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord. And he shall bear the*

Joh. 1. 45. Act. 3. 22. 7. 37. Heb. 9. Lev. 16. 20. &c. Numb. 21. Joh. 3. 14. Isa. 9. 6. 11. 1. 42. 1. 49. 6. Hag. 2. 7. Matt. 12. 40. Jonah. 2. 1, 2. Zech. 6. 12, 13.

Glory,

Glory, and shall sit and Rule upon his Throne, and he shall be a Priest upon his Throne, and the Counsel of Peace shall be between them both. This is spoken of *John* the Baptist in *Malachi*; *Behold, I will send my Messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me.* Then the Prophet speaks of Christ himself. *But unto you that fear my Name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his Wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as Calves of the Stall.* Here is a further Explication than was before. Christ under the Law was under a Vail, and is clearly Revealed under the Gospel: So, that *the Law is our School-Master to bring us to Christ.* So, that this thing is that which God hath from the beginning been making out to Man; and as he was pleased, did give the World some further Information. This is the great point that we *Christians* are highly Gratified in; greatly provided for, by God. Let it be the Sense and Language of our Souls: *Let it be to us according to thy Word.* Therefore acknowledge God in *Christ*, Go to God by *Jesus Christ.*

Disc. V.

Mal. 3. 1. Mal. 4. 2.

Ga. 3. 24.

Ever since Sin, from the beginning, God hath been Exhibiting and Declaring Christ to us; as the only means of our Acceptance and Recomendation to God. I began at the Promise, the first Draught of Gospel Truth, the *Seed of the Woman shall break the Serpents Head:* and then went to that to *Abraham.* And there is for this one signal Promise there; which I omitted: By Virtue of that Promise, *Isaac* must either be the *Messias*, or the Progenitor of Him. He is therefore to be a *Sacrifice* by God's appointment; and *Abraham's* Intention was prevented, by the presenting of a Ram. Here was an Instruction to *Abraham*, that the *Messias* should Save the World by his Death, the Sacrifice of Himself: And while there was a suspension, there should be a continual Sacrifice, as was shewn forth by the Ram: Which was throughout the whole

Gen. 22.

Vol. III. *Jewiſh* Pedagogy; wherein you have a World of Ceremonies and Types of Chriſt. Things that were only Good becauſe of Divine Inſtitution; and in that they did foreſhew the *Meſſias*: And when He came, theſe were changed into the Goſpel-form of Faith, and Worſhip. The ſtanding Type of Chriſt the High-Prieſt and the Tabernacle were an Exhibition of Him: And all the Prophets ſpake of him, and Repreſented him. Here I omitted one ſignal One, the Propheſie in *Daniel*. The Sum of which is, that it is Revealed to *Daniel*, that the Captivity ſhould return, the Temple be built, and that in about 400 Years Chriſt the *Meſſias* ſhould be Exhibited: An account of his Death is there given. So, that the *Law*, as the Apoſtle ſaith, *was a School-maſter to Chriſt*. So the Attonement made by Chriſt's Blood hath been from the beginning. So, that Chriſt is ſaid to be *a Lamb ſlain from the Foundation of the World*, becauſe of Chriſt's willingneſs; He did freely Undertake it. So, that Chriſt hath been under ſome Manifeſtation, from the beginning: And hath had ſundry and ſeveral Atteſtations from the very firſt Approach of God to Man. He hath ſpoken ſeveral times of Chriſt, and ſtill more and more to the purpoſe; till at laſt, he did fully Exhibit his Son. This is that which the Apoſtle ſpeaks to the *Hebrews*. One Scripture more for this; when the Diſciples were converſing together about the Death of Chriſt, and at laſt ſaid, *we hoped that he ſhould have ſaved his People*, Our Saviour ſaith, *O Fools, and ſlow of Heart, to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken! Ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his Glory.*

Dan. 9. 24.

Gal. 3. 24.

Rev. 13. 8.

Heb. 1, 1.

Lu. 24, 25, 26.

2*dly*. Without *God's Jealouſie* we may go to God by *Chriſt*, and may make *Chriſt the Mean* of our Acceptance; and Uſe Him as the Way; make advantage of his Merit: For he is truly a Meritorious and procuring Cauſe, and there is none beſides

ſides Him. This I obſerve, becauſe it is dreadful to read the ſecond Commandment. Without God's Jealouſie, we may go to God by Chriſt, and may put Chriſt between God and us, in all Acts of Worſhip, in all our Addreſſes to God. On the one Part, you may put none beſides him: And on the other ſide, to Neglect a way of God's appointment, ſhews us to be careleſs of our own Welfare. It is a giving Honour, and the Prerogative that God hath for his Only Son, to be an Advocate for Apoſtate Creatures: And herein, not the higheſt Angel in Glory may in any meaſure participate. This is the *Angel of the Church*, that takes their *Prayers* and perfumes them with Incenſe, and ſo Offers them up to God. *As there is one God, ſo there is one Mediator between God and Man, the Lord Chriſt Jeſus. We are come unto Jeſus the Mediator of the New Covenant.* There is an unchangeable Prieſthood eſtabliſhed in his Hands; He will ever continue, and never give over, till he hath rendred up God's portion to himſelf, in full tale: and then ſhall *God be all in all.*

Diſc. V.

Rev. 8. 3.

1 Tim. 2. 5.
Heb. 12. 24
7. 24.

1 Cor. 15.

I will branch this out in theſe Three Particulars.

Firſt, Chriſt is a *Middle Perſon*, in the Order of Being; and therefore of himſelf Fit to be a Mediator between God and Man. He unites Heaven and Earth in his Perſon, and therefore is a Fit Perſon to Reconcile God and Man in his Office. He is the *Eternal Reaſon*; therefore called the *Wiſdom of the Father*; therefore moſt fit to Recover the Reaſonable Creature.

Joh. 1. 1.
Λόγος.
1 Cor. 1. 24.

Secondly, Chriſt is the *Inſtituted, the Appointed Way. The way, the Truth, and the Life. Him hath the Father Sanctified* (ſet a part) to this great work. *A Body haſt thou fitted me*, as Inſtrumental, as ſubſervient to this Work. The end of the Office of Chriſt is to *Bring all unto God.* None can think that ſo Grand an Appointment of God to ſo excel-

Joh. 14. 6.
10. 36.
Heb. 10. 5.

Vol. III. lent an End; ſhould be either Improper, Impertinent, or Inſufficient.

Thirdly, Chriſt is a *publick Good*. *Caiphas* ſpake, Joh. 18. 14. that it was expedient *that one ſhould dye for the People.* Καθαρματα. The Heathen had this Notion upon it; to which the Apoſtles allude, 1 *Cor.* 4. 13. The Repreſenter ſtands for another, the Perſon Repreſented: And is it not highly credible, if we are damnified by being Repreſented by the firſt *Adam*, that we ſhould be Recovered by being Repreſented by the ſecond *Adam*? Chriſt is a *publick Good.*

3. 'Tis according to the *Tenour of Holy Scripture* to think theſe *two things.* (1.) *That whoſoever* is accepted of God, is accepted in Chriſt; and, (2.) A fallen Creature, that is not accepted of God in Chriſt, is rejected for ever. He that is accepted of God, is accepted in *Jeſus Chriſt*; well pleaſing to God in *Jeſus Chriſt.* *Daniel* would go to God in ſomething that is the Type of Chriſt. *Abel*'s Sacrifice was accepted of God; for it was a Sacrifice that was Repreſentative of Chriſt: *Cain*'s was not; *Abel*'s Heb. 11. 4. was. By Faith he did it. Let us take heed. *Nadab* and *Abihu* did approach to God in the uſe of ſtrange Fire; that was their Sin; and their Puniſhment was by Fire. Let us take heed of going to God in any other than his own way: Let us well conſider, lay aſide vain Imagination, and ſubmit to Divine Wiſdom, and be directed by the Holy Scriptures, that teach us to deny our ſelves, and make uſe of Chriſt's Intereſt, and go to God in the uſe of his Name. Let us not Reſt in it, when we uſe it as a bare Form of Words; but lay the whole Streſs upon it: For Chriſt is not only of Conveni- Gal. 3. 21, 22. ence, but down-right Neceſſity. If Man could have come to God in another way, the Son of God needed not to have Died. The blind Man knew this, that it is a Truth, that *God hears not Sinners*: He admits them not to come in confidence of themſelves,

ſelves, but would have them come to him in this new and living way. So that this Truth is of as great Uſe, as the Intereſt in God is Worth to you: For in this way, and no other, we are abundantly provided for. So this is truly and properly an Evangelical Notion; this is truly the Goſpel-point, the great Appointment of God to us; Man's Neceſſity in his ruined Condition, tranſcendent to the Invention of Angels or Men. This is that which we ſhould never have thought on but by Goſpel-Revelation. If it could have been propoſed, a Man preſently might have liked it; but who could have put it into being? This is highly acceptable to the Reaſon of a Man's Mind, now it is propoſed. For I do not find the revealed Truths have any Repugnancy to the Nature of Man: They have a Tranſcendency, but no Repugnancy. So acceptable is this Knowledge, now it is declared by God. Thoſe Men that have been the Wiſeſt of Men among the Philoſophers, they had a great conceit of this Truth, of a *Mediation* between God and Man; and thought the pure Deity was ſo High and Lofty, ſo Pure and Abſtract, that we, in our Meaneſs, could not have Acceſs. They thought thus, that had not this Light of Scripture: Which I take notice of here to abaſe the Arrogancy of ſome that are born within the Pale of the Church. The Heathen did conceive, that it was too much for us in our Meanneſs to approach Supream and Sovereign Deity. Therefore they conceited a ſort of *Middle Powers*, which were either Angels, or glorified Spirits, and were called *Dæmons*. I could give you a great many of thoſe. They have the very Notion: How they came by it, that we know not; but they have the *very Notion*, only they miſtake in the Perſon.

Diſc. V.

Plato Symp.

Πᾶν Δαιμόνιον μεταξὺ ἐστὶ Θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ. *Plato calls Dæmons.*

I have two Reaſons why I trouble this Congregation with this Philoſophy: (1.) There are a great many, that under a pretence of Learning and Philoſophy,

ἑρμηνευτικὴν καὶ διακονικὴν φύσιν.

Vol. III. loſophy, do ſtand out againſt Goſpel-Truth; and this is pernicious to their own Souls, and others; when Men by Wiſdom will not know God. Again, (2) You will not blame me ſure for expounding Scripture: For unleſs you know *This*, you will not underſtand many places of Scripture. It was the
2 King. 21. 3. Idolatry of *Manaſſeh*: It was the *Hoſt of Heaven* they worſhipped; the Sovereign Gods in the Sun,
2 Chron. 33. 3. Moon and Stars. But the *Dæmons*, or *Middle Beings*, the Scripture calls *Baalim*. This Doctrine of *Dæmon*'s Divinity St. *Paul* diſputes againſt, where he
Col. 2. 18. tells us, that under *a Shew of Humility*, they bring in this Doctrine: Therefore they would go to God by the Mediation of thoſe *Dæmons*. But St. *Paul* gives Reaſons againſt them; *viz. The fulneſs of the*
v. 9. *Godhead dwelt in Chriſt*; therefore there needed no
v. 10. Collegue with him. We are compleat in him: We need none with him. And where he ſaith,
1 Cor. 10. 21. *We cannot be Partakers of the Table of the Lord, and the Table of Devils*, (it ſhould be of *Dæmons*) becauſe there is but *one Mediator*. And he ſeems to
Act. 17. 18. Ξένων Δαιμονίων. be a *Setter forth of ſtrange Gods, becauſe he preached to them Jeſus and the Reſurrection*. The great Idolatry that hath been, hath been about theſe *Dæmons*:
Δεισιδαιμονεστέρους, So St. *Paul* underſtood it. *I perceive that in all things you are too much given to Dæmons*. Now againſt this St. *Paul* doth aſſert, as *One God*, unlimited and unbounded, and Principal: So *One Interceſſor*, that is
Rev. 9. 20. *Jeſus Chriſt*. *And the reſt of the Men which were not killed by theſe Plagues, yet repented not of the Works of their Hands, that they ſhould not worſhip Devils*, i. e.
Δαιμόνια. *Dæmons*: It is a *Middle Power*, a Deified Perſon, a Glorified Perſon, or Angel; and they Worſhipped theſe. And now I hope you will have me excuſed for troubling you with this piece of *Heatheniſh* Philoſophy: For by this you ſee, that conſiderate Perſons in Heatheniſm, did conceive it was proper to go to God by a Mediator. And by this I controul

troul the Arrogance of ſome that are under the Go- Diſc. V.
ſpel, that think they can go to God without a Mediator, of themſelves. And then you have an Account here of the Idolatry of the *Jews*. They were not ſo ſottiſh to think the Calf they made, was the Deity that brought them out of *Egypt*: But he was a *Middle Thing*. And ſo their Idolatry was not a taking the Thing worſhipped for Deity; but a *Dæmon*, a *Middle Thing*, whereby they addreſs'd themſelves to that Deity. And this you have alſo hinted by St. *John*, and in the *Revelations*. Rev. 9. 26.

DISCOURSE VI.

The Mediation of Chriſt, the Grand Inſtitution of God.

COL. 3. 17.

And whatſoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

THis is the great *Inſtitution* of the Goſpel; and Diſc. VI.
if any of us mean to be ſaved, we are to liſten to what God ſpeaks, now that he makes Propoſals concerning our Recovery, our Reconciliation to him, and our Supply in the State of contracted Miſery and Neceſſity wherein we are. The Sum is this. We are all of us under an Univerſal Forfeiture. We have prejudiced the Intereſt we have in God as our Creator: We cannot have Confidence in the Relation to God as the Original of our Being, becauſe we have given him Offence:

We

Vol. III. We have forfeited our Happineſs, by conſenting to Iniquity: We have worſted our Faculties, and marred our Spirits. In this Caſe of general Neceſſity, Divine Goodneſs hath declared it ſelf, in finding out a way, and recommending it to us; a way, in which if we come to God, we ſhall not be refuſed, but find Acceptance; that is, by the Son of God; whom God hath appointed the Head of Mankind. He hath gathered all together in Chriſt, as to a Head. We who, as related to the Firſt *Adam*, are Children of Diſobedience; ſo in Chriſt are received into Favour: We come to God, and we pray to be accepted upon his Account. This is, in ſhort, a Comment upon the Text, *Whatſoever ye do, do all in the Name*, &c. As knowing we are accepted in God by *Chriſt*; who ever lives to make Interceſſion for all thoſe that come to God by him. This Knowledge is the Saving Doctrine of the Church: In this we are to be well informed and directed, and to take heed we do not fall off from Chriſt. Miſcarriages on this account I ſhall preſently lay before you: And as Mariners, by the Miſcarriages of Ships that went before them, take warning; ſo may we do. The Miſcarriages that were before on this Account, and the Judgments upon Men, are Revealed and Written in Scripture; that we may be made aware.

I have ſhewed you already, that notwithſtanding there is a various and different Uſe of the Word [*Name*] in Scripture; yet that which I pitched upon was, That what One does *in the Name of the Lord Jeſus*, he does in his Acceptance. He is the great Recommender of the Creature to the Mercy and Goodneſs of God; the only Mediator between God and Man; the Foundation upon which we muſt build, if we would ſtand againſt Storms and Tempeſts. All Glory muſt be to the Lord: Whatſoever is in any thing elſe, is the inſolence

ſolence of a fooliſh Creature, and falls under this Diſc. VI.
Condemnation, *God reſiſts the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.*

Whatſoever you do, &c. To make this out, I ſhewed you, That Chriſt hath been *Declared* by God, as the only way of Man's Acceptance with God, ever ſince the Fall of Man.

I have ſhewed you in the ſeveral Ages, when God hath been highly pleaſed with the Service of an eminent Perſon, or willing to gratifie the World: He hath then declared ſomething more of *Jeſus Chriſt.*

The great Faith of the *Jewiſh* Nation, was the Expectation of Chriſt. I have alſo ſhew'd you, that all the *Jewiſh* Ceremonies were Types of Chriſt, and were fulfilled in him. And God, who formerly in divers Pieces and Shapes, ſpake in time paſt by the Prophets; now, in the time of the Goſpel, hath ſpoken fully out, manifeſting his Son, Whereas before it was a *Myſtery hidden*; now 'tis no longer ſuch a Myſtery, but *God manifeſt in the Fleſh.* 1 Tim. 3. 16.
I have ſhewed you, that Divinity inhabiting Humane Nature, is that which God intimated by the Temple among the *Jews*; which was a Shadow of Divinity inhabiting the Humane Nature of Chriſt.

I have alſo ſhewed you, that there is no Fear, or Suſpicion, or Danger of God's *Jealouſie* in this making uſe of Chriſt to go to God. For we have plain *Inſtitution* for this: He is the *great Angel of the Covenant* to perfume, with the Incenſe of his own Worthineſs, the Prayers of the Saints: And thoſe that are Accepted of God, are accepted in and through Chriſt's Sacrifice. We, notwithſtanding the utmoſt Improvement of our Faculties, muſt not terminate our ſelves in our ſelves; or think of our ſelves above what we ought to think; but depend upon God's Courteſie, and think our ſelves well

provi-

Vol. III. provided for, only by the Goodneſs of God declared in Jeſus Chriſt.

Laſtly, This great Salvation, going to God by means of a Mediator, hath *not been Unacceptable* to the World in general: But the moſt ſober Men in the World out of the *Jewiſh* Nation, have thought ſo great Difference between the Immortal God, and Mortal Creature; that they thought it neceſſary ſomething ſhould mediate between them. Hereof we may make great Advantage: So that ſince this Truth is revealed, and we have Warrant from God to believe, we may think it is not contrary to the Nature of Man to receive the Truth, now that it is revealed by God. The moſt refined Philoſophers have diſcours'd excellently in this Caſe, of the Neceſſity of a Mortal Creature going to Deity by a Mediator. But for want of knowing by whom to go, they did err in the *Medium*; and did fancy either Angels, or glorified Spirits to be their Mediators. And this was the Philoſophy that was general, and did prevail in the World in the time of our Saviour, as I ſhew'd you by the Doctrine of *Dæmons*; which was the Doctrine of a *Middle Power*; That they did Mediate in, and interpoſe between Supream Deity and us who live in Bodies of Fleſh. I was the more free to give you an Account of this, becauſe it is ſo much in Scripture. St. *Paul* tells them, they were *too much given up to this Doctrine of Dæmons.* The Apoſtle doth expreſly diſpute againſt it; and brings an Argument againſt it; for he ſaith, that *in Chriſt dwells the fulneſs of the Godhead bodily*: And therefore he needs no Colleague. And *we are compleat in him.* And he doth aſſert that *to us* (who are taught of God) there is *One God*, and *One Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, the Mediator. And in the Book of the *Revelations*, there they are Puniſhed for the *Dæmon-Worſhip*: For though it be tranſlated *Devil*, we are not

Act. 17. 22. Col. 2. 18. 9. 1 Cor. 8. 6. Rev. 9. 20.

not to underſtand it, as *we do, Devil*: but it were better that the Word were rendred *Dæmon.* Diſc. VI.

The Idolatry charged upon the *Jews*, and that which the Apoſtle pleaded ſo againſt; and that which in the *Revelations* is condemned, ſhews, that it is Natural to the Reaſon of Man, to think of a Diſproportion to Deity. It is according to the Reaſon of Man's Mind, to imagine that there ſhould be a Mediator between God and Man. But when we conſider, how much we have diſabled our Faculties, and have given God an Offence: How much more reaſonable is it for us to conceive that it is fit for ſuch Wretches as we are, that we ſhould go to God by a Mediator; eſpecially ſince it is ſo fully declared?

Thus have I taken liberty to Repreſent to you what I have Diſcourſed on this Argument. Now, 1*ſt.* give me leave to *convince four* ſeveral ſorts of Men; as being extreamly Wanting to themſelves: And they are theſe.

1. The Wilful *Jews.*

2. The Superſtitious *Papiſts.*

3. The *Ignorant Proteſtants*, who are only of Religion by Profeſſion. Who are ſo ſhallow in Proteſtant Religion, that it is as much as if they were of no Religion at all.

4. Meer *Naturaliſts*; Men that by their own conceited Wiſdom, do not ſubmit to the Wiſdom of God.

1*ſt.* For the *wilful Jews.* Though theirs was the Fathers; theirs the Covenant of Grace, theirs the Adoption, *&c.* yet the *Jews* of theſe times, and ſince our Saviour's Time, are quite off from Acknowledging Chriſt the promiſed *Meſſias*; and eſtabliſh their Own Righteouſneſs in his ſtead. And for the Promiſes that we inſiſt upon, wherein the *Meſſias* is intended, the *Jews* formerly did interpret them to what we do in theſe latter days.

Now

Vol. III. Now what do the *Jews* ſtand upon to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs? *Iſrael, which followed after the Law of Righteouſneſs, hath not attained to the Law of Righteouſneſs, becauſe they ſought it not by Faith*; &c. Again, *They being ignorant of God's Righteouſneſs, and going about to eſtabliſh their own Righteouſneſs, have not ſubmitted themſelves unto the Righteouſneſs of God. For Chriſt is the end of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth.* They refuſe the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, and ſet up a Righteouſneſs of their own: That conſiſts of four particulars; They tell us of their *Good Works*, their *Repentance*, their *Afflictions*, and their *Sacrifices*. Of their *Good Works*: theſe we acknowledge, but have no Confidence in any Merit of our own. Their *Repentance*, we Acknowledge, but not as Meritorious: Their *Afflictions*; but thoſe are not ſatisfactory to Divine Juſtice: Their *Sacrifices*; and this fails them, becauſe they are out of their own Land, and from their own Temple. So, the *Jews* do deſtroy the Righteouſneſs of God's Proviſion, and Eſtabliſh a Righteouſneſs of their own; *not holding the Head.* This for the ſatisfaction of the Chriſtian World; becauſe the *Jews* are the Pretenders to be the only Worſhippers of God.

Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3, 4. Col. 2. 19.

2dly. The *Superſtitious Papiſts.* And truly, I think it much for their Edification, to ſhew you what cauſe we had to purſue a Reformation; and to continue it. I will give them all that may be allowed. I do acknowledge, that they do hold the Foundation: that which will not ſtand upon it, they build Hay, and Stubble, and Combuſtible matter; or elſe, other Foundation with Chriſt they ſuperad. They do acknowledge all our Articles of Faith: So, that we have their Atteſtation: But they ſuperadd other Articles of Faith, that are prejudicial to many main Principles of Religion. For ſatisfaction herein, I refer you to a little Book, called

Biſhop Taylor, *p.* 207.

called a *Diſwaſive from Popery.* I will give you ſome of the Heads of them, and only ſuch that Intrench upon the Doctrine in Hand. The Invocation of Saints and Angels: the Merits of Saints, which they mention to God in their Prayers: Find me a Warrant for this in Scripture. Their Worſhip of Images, Shrines, Croſſes; their Approaching to God in the uſe of them, and by Means of them. I do them no wrong. The conſecrated Hoſt, which is available for Perſons abſent, as well as preſent; dead as well as living. Then the Pope's Indulgencies, and ſelling Pardons: Their Pilgrimages, as things that make amends for great Enormities, and extraordinary Crimes. Their Relicks; their Holy Water, for making better Mens Services to God; which make them to participate of the Virtue and Office of Chriſt; their Perfection, and being in themſelves better then others. I could ſhew you more, but theſe are enough; for the other I refer you to the aforeſaid Author. Now all theſe are Encroachments upon Chriſt's Office; for God admits none to this Work but Chriſt. It is a peculiar Honour He hath reſerved to the *ſecond Perſon of the Trinity*, to be a Mediator between him and his Creatures, in all their Worſhip and Approaches to Him. And all theſe things I have ſhewed you, in the *Romiſh Church*, are Encroachments upon this particularity. It is ſafe for us to have a ſure Word of Teſtimony that we ought to adhere to; and to forbear thoſe things that are ſuperadded. But ſo much for that. In the Diſc. VI.

3*d.* Place: Our *Ignorant Proteſtants.* And theſe are ſo far from the Reformed Religion; that really they have no Religion. They do not know their Religion; and if they do not know it, they cannot Act according to it. Reformed Religion, tho' the beſt Religion, yet bare Profeſſion of it will do a Man no good; it will not ſerve a Man hereafter.

But

Vol. III. But what have These to say for themselves? They are Ignorant Good-meaning People; and hope to be Saved by Good-meaning. They go in a Croud; what their Religion is, they understand not; and it being so, they cannot comply in Practice. To
Rom. 12. 1. these I will say, that the Apostle when he speaks of the Service of God, calls it a *Reasonable Service*. God must be *worshiped in Spirit*; the Mind must be informed, the Understanding illuminated: Unless Religion could work as a charm, they will be never the better for Religion. But Religion works by Illumination, by Teaching the Reason of Man's Mind. But these are so slow, that they are able to give no further Account of it, but the Name.

4. But then we have notable Contenders, *meer Naturalists*. These indeed will talk gallantly of subjecting Body to Mind; and speak highly of the Light of Nature, and the Principle of Reason: Things excellent; things eminently valuable by God; and speak Men worthy. But to these I fairly propose, That they do not neglect the *Grace of God*. Think that he can further gratifie; think that he can transcend the Created State; think that he can set over you the Head of your Recommendation, by whom your Access to God may be facilitated. These Men are a very great Confutation of the World; and will be the condemning of many Christians at the day of Judgment. I cannot but think how dreadful it will be at the day of Judgment. I cannot but think how dreadful it will be, to see such a Man as *Socrates* and *Plato* received into Heaven; and Christians cast out. But to these I will say, that God hath made a greater Manifestation, and hath given us a Direction to come to him by a Person of high Acceptance. And therefore it becomes us to add this to all our high endeavours, the Recommenda-

tion

tion of our Services to God, by the Mediation of the Son of God. Diſc. VI.

Theſe are Perſons which a Man would compaſſionate as ſoon as any Men in the World; that is, thoſe that are *meer Naturaliſts*. They are Catholick. They entertain all that ever was in the World from God: All that hath any Foundation at all from God: Theſe only ſtick at the Revelation and the *Superaddition*. To theſe I would ſay: You do well as far as you go. You do well to entertain all that God hath laid the Foundation for. You do well to follow the Light of Reaſon; but do you think that God can do no more? Do you think that God did all at once? I do not blame theſe Men, as all the World blames them: I do not blame theſe Men, that they are very ſlow of Faith; that they will not believe further than they ſee Reaſon; for nothing is more impotent, than to be Light of Faith. A Man cannot diſhonour God, and Abuſe himſelf more, than to be Light of Faith, and eaſie to believe. *The Fool*, ſaith *Solomon*, *believeth every thing*. Therefore far be it from me to challenge theſe Men upon *this* Account. But we muſt be ready to Hear, when God ſhall ſpeak. When God did appear to *Abraham* about ſacrificing his Son, He did ſo Manifeſt himſelf, that *Abraham* was put out of all Doubt or Queſtion.

Pro. 14: 15.

Gen. 22.

I will tell you, what are the Doctrines theſe Men do adhere to: Living according to the Law of Nature: rightly Uſing our Faculties: Governing our Spirits: Doing all things by unqueſtionable Reaſon; and in caſe of Injuſtice, make ſatisfaction: Honouring the Deity, as the Original of our Being. Theſe are things that are Equivalent to the ſeven Precepts of *Noah*. Yet there is no Reaſon why the *Grace of God bringing Salvation*, ſhould not be ſuperadded; that *Teaches Men to live Soberly, Righteouſly and Godly*. Hear you ſee this Eſtabliſh-

eth the other. My Exhortation is to these Persons: Be as punctual, as Compleat in your Moral Righteousness, as is imaginable: The more you are so, the more you glorifie God. Yet still Acknowledge the *Grace of God*: Make use of Christ's Mediation. Let all be by Him recommended to God: Let the Perfume of the Angel of the Covenant be put to your Righteousness. For if there were a Law that could give Life, God would not have declared himself in Christ Jesus. After-Obedience doth not make Recompence for a former Neglect.

It was reported of *Pelagius* (for which we judge him) that he should believe that the Saints of old were Saved by the Law of *Moses*; and if they fail of any thing, by Repentance they were Recovered again. But under the Gospel, since the Holy Scripture tells us there is One God, and One Mediator, the Lord *Jesus Christ*; it is every way Safe for us to have this Knowledge, to make use of this one Mediator, the Lord *Jesus Christ*. If there be any one so presumptuous as to persuade any Man he can be saved without Christ, I question whether that Man can be saved by Christ.

Qui alicui Salutem extra Christum polliceri audet, nescio an ipse per Christum Salvari possit. Aug.

II. In the next place I will lay down several Arguments to persuade every one to be very Cordial about this work. Take heed of the Peril of Idolatry. I will give you six or seven considerable Arguments.

1*st*. I offer to your consideration, that it cannot be imagined, that the *Jews*, a People of God, did commit that gross Idolatry *a parte Objecti*; that They did think a Stock or Stone to be God: but only that it was *a parte Medii*. They did not think the Molten Calf the God that brought them out of *Egypt*; or that divided the Red Sea, and fed them in the Wilderness, when *Aaron* had his Hand in the making of it. They bring the Calf in *Moses* stead. *As for this* Moses, *we know not what is become of him, make us something to go before us.* Persons of the greatest

Ex. 32. 1, 5. *Loco Mosis*

greateſt Improvement thought a great deal more honourably of Deity than this amounts to. What the Britiſh People Thought, we diſpute not; for we muſt not diſpute a thing from what a *Monſter is.* Now the Idolatry that hath been, is about the *Mean of worſhip, not the Object.* The *Papiſts* blame thoſe that worſhip Idols by way of Object. It is evident, that our Image-Maintainers have the ſame Opinion of their *Saints*, as Idolators of old had of their *Gods.* (*Dii Medioxumi.*) The Heathen did no other, than the Papiſts now adays do, profeſs that they Worſhip God Terminatively, and their Idols and Saints mediately. This is that which is the Doctrine of *our Church*; *the moſt purely Reformed Church in the World*: Now the Church doth not only affirm this, but prove this. The firſt is St. *Auguſtine.* The moſt Reformed Men of the *Gentiles* ſay, they do not intend to Terminate their Worſhip in their Images, but uſe them as Mediator. So *Lactantius* ſaith; the *Gentiles* ſay, we fear not the Images, but they whom the Images Repreſents. And *Clemens* ſaith of the *Gentiles*, that they worſhip viſible Images, for the Honour of the Inviſible Gods. This is of very great Uſe to Defend us from Superſtition, that we Underſtand the Idolatry of the World hath been in the Uſe of falſe Mediators. It is an Encroachment upon Chriſt to make uſe of Images. One *Socrates* is more for the Proof of this than ten thouſand Vulgar; becauſe he hath improved his Intellect. They are Moral Monſters who have not. Thus it appears that Chriſtian-Idolaters, who Worſhip Saints and Images, do uſe the ſame Excuſes, which the Gentile-Idolaters did. This the Papiſts and Superſtitious Perſons will by no means endure: but we ſee it is the Senſe of the aforeſaid Fathers, and of the Church of *England.*

Diſc. VI.

Jer. 10. 14. and 51. 17.

A Monſtro non diſputatur contra Naturam.

Aug. on Pſ. 135.

2. The 2*d.* Argument is, the great Terror of *the ſecond Commandment*, wherein all falſe Modes and

Vol. III. Ways of Worſhip are prohibited under a dreadful Threat, which is particularly appropriated to *this one Sin.* Let us think with our ſelves, that *God is a conſuming Fire*, and That *it is a dreadful thing to fall into the Hands of the Living God.* Let us think of the ſtreight that *David* brought himſelf into, when three things were propoſed to him; and he thought it beſt to *fall into the Hands of God:* Yet there died by Peſtilence ſeventy Thouſand. Therefore I recommend to you this Scripture, *Little Children, keep you ſelves from Idols:* And he brings it in thus. He had ſhewn that Chriſt recommends us to God; and he ſhuts up all, *Little Children*, &c. For if we make uſe of any other in the Place of Chriſt, we have an Idol in our Hearts.

Heb. 12. 27. & 10. 31.

2 Sam. 24. 14.

1 Joh. 5. 21.

3. There is in the *Prophetical* part of Holy Scripture, a *Prediction* of Defection and *Apoſtacy* that will be in the *latter Times*; and we are concerned to know the great Hazard and Danger the World is expoſed to, in the latter times. You have in *Daniel* a Prediction concerning the times: And the Apoſtle uſes Words which are a Prediction, and do Forewarn us of ſome great departure from the excellent Truth of the Goſpel, that will be fatal and Miſchievous. *Let no Man Deceive you by any means: For that day ſhall not come, except there come a falling away firſt, and that Man of Sin be revealed, the Son of Perdition.* And then in the Revelations you have the *Beaſt and his worſhippers, and followers*, and *thoſe that have the number of his Name:* And theſe in Oppoſition to the *Followers of the Lamb.* We are here therefore concerned to know what is an *Impoſture* in the times wherein we Live. And this muſt of neceſſity be to Adulterate ſome piece of Divine Truth. Now this Truth is, the great Goſpel-direction of going to God by *Jeſus Chriſt.* This is the Main and Principal Intention of the whole Goſpel, to Recommend Chriſt to us, by whom we

Dan. 7. 2 Th. 2. Rev. 13.

2 Th. 2. 3.

Rev. 17. 18.

are

are Accepted; in whom we have confidence and assurance of God's Grace and Favour; by whom we are provided against our own Unworthiness; and the Book of the Gospel is Written to Reveal this Christ to us. *He is the way, the Truth, and the Life*: and if we Leave Him out, and go to God in Self-confidence, we are likely to be Reproved; For God *resisteth the Proud.* Now the great Apostacy is most likely to be the Depravation of *this.* This is the Principal and Prime Direction of Divine Wisdom. This is that in which God looks upon Himself as Glorified, that We will give up our selves intirely to Him. Now for a Man to Depart from this way; or to adjoyn to this a way of his own Invention; this is like to be the *Grand Impoſture.* The *World* hath miscarried upon this point; And the *Jews* have miscarried upon this point. And, if We Understand any thing of the Prophets, either *Daniel*, or that in the *Thessalonians*, or the whole Book of the *Revelations*; false Mediation is the great Sin. But that this great Miscarriage will not be any Ceremony, or any point of Morality, I persuade my self, for this Reason: I do not find, looking backward, and considering the present State of things, That the World is likely to Miscarry in any point of Doctrine in Morals. I do confess there hath been, and is, and will be, *Practical Miscarriage in Morals*: For St. *John* tells us, that the *whole World lies in wickedness*: But 'tis not likely there will be *Doctrinal Miscarriages in Morals*: For I take the Doctrine of Morals, to live Godly, Righteously, and Soberly: And can any one be credited that will maintain Injustice, Violence and Cruelty; Sodomy, Sinful Lust, and all things contrary to Chastity, Temperance, and Humility; Haughtiness, Pride, *&c?* No. But, for Righteousness, Love, Charity, equal Dealing, Reverence of Deity, there is the

Disc. VI.

Joh. 20. 31.

1 Joh. 5. 19.

Vol. III. Light of God's Creation in ſome Meaſure remaining in all Men. Theſe things have Teſtimony in all Nations, in all places, at all Times. The more Reformed of all Nations have given Witneſs and Teſtimony to theſe great things. Therefore if any one riſe up, and declare any thing contrary to theſe Principles of Morality; he would have the Lye given him, and be looked upon to be a Perſon not to be Credited. I appeal to him that is intemperate, whether (take him when he is himſelf) he will not ſay, the Sober Man Lives better than he: Take him that is the Wantonneſt Perſon in a Country, that diſhonours his Body, and contracts filthy Diſeaſes; this Man will Acknowledge, that he that lives Chaſtly is better than he. Every one knows, that Vertue is a Divine thing, and Vice is Deviliſh. They that practiſe otherwiſe, give Teſtimony to the better. How infamous is the Name of *Gnoſticks*, that were 1600 Years ago? Now theſe, being Perſons of ſuch like Principles, they will be Infamous. Therefore, I ſay, as they ſay of a Cannon Bullet; he is Curſed in his Mother's Belly who is killed by a Cannon Bullet. Therefore in all Probability, this great Defection which will be in the Church, muſt be from a piece of Revealed Truth. And this I am ſpeaking of, is the greateſt Piece of Revealed Truth. A Miſcarriage in way of Preſumption and Boldneſs; either in deſerting the Foundation, or adding thereto. Therefore it muſt be in *this*; the ſole Mediation, by the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. For the Apoſtacy cannot be in Morals, much leſs in Ceremonials in Religion; for in theſe things one would affect to differ as little as may be; but would heartily agree with all thoſe that worſhip God: and for Modes, leave every one to his own liberty, except where we are bound to comply with Authority. It muſt be in ſomething that is Main and Principal; and not being likely to be

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in Morals, it muſt be in a piece of *Revealed Truth*: And this is the great one; *One God*, and *One Mediator*, *the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. That is the 3d. Argument. The *4th* Perſuaſion to take care that we go to God only by Chriſt, is this: There is nothing, if we Practice it duly, is to our greater *Advantage*; if unduly, to our greater *Miſchief*. For if we go to God through Chriſt, then we ſubſcribe to the Wiſdom of God, we Honour God; we acknowledge that his Wiſdom and his Goodneſs are the Principle of our Recovery; and *this* God takes for Service. And then we have for Security the great Promiſe of the Goſpel: *Whatſoever ye aſk of the Father in my Name, ſhall be done to you. Whoſoever comes to God in my Name, ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out.* But if we uſe any *falſe Mediation*, we do not only loſe our Labour, but abuſe our ſelves, and provoke God. For which I refer you to the Story of *Eliſha* and the Prieſts of *Baal*: There ſee, after all their Labour, what their Devotion ends in; all of them cut off together. The going to God in a direct way, is a very great Advantage; it is profitable to have the Security of the Promiſe: We Honour God by ſubſcribing to his Wiſdom. But if we do otherwiſe, then we meet with the Worſhippers of *Baal*. Alſo let me tell you of *Nadab* and *Abihu*; they offered ſtrange Fire, and were puniſhed by Fire. Here is therefore my Obſervation: If we in our Addreſſes to God keep up to God's Direction, we Honour God, and have the Security of the Divine Promiſe: But if we go to God of our own Head, remember the Prieſts of *Baal*, and the Story of *Nadab* and *Abihu*. Here a Man runs out into the Final Miſcarriage: If he does not *Hold the Head*, this denotes a Miſcarriage in the *Main*; which is moſt dangerous.

Diſc. VI.

Joh. 16. 23. & 6. 37.

1 King. 18. 40.

Lev. 10. 1, 2.

Col. 2. 19.

5thly, Is it Wiſdom for any one to be at the coſt of Religious Actions to *no Purpoſe*? For to what Purpoſe is it for any Man to do any thing that

Vol. III. will give God an Offence? Nothing we do will diſtaſte God more than falſe Mediation. They do in effect ſay, God pretendeth to be Wiſe, but our Way is better. And, what a Scorn is this to be put upon God; for Men to be Wiſe in their own Eyes?

Col. 2. 18. *Let no Man beguile you of your Reward in a voluntary Humility, and Worſhip of Angels.* If you miſcarry, you fall ſhort of your Reward, by *Worſhip of Angels.* You ſee he ſpeaks to the Point; *vainly puffed up*: This is under pretence of Wiſdom. Had it

1 Sam. 13. 13. not been better for *Saul*, to have omitted Sacrifice at that time, than to have forced himſelf? He pretends Neceſſity; and yet God was never well pleaſed with him afterward. Had it not been better for *Uzzah* to have expoſed the tottering Ark, to what

2 Sam. 6. 7. might have happened, than to ſtretch out his Hand without Warrant? If you will be at the Coſt of Religious Worſhip, go to God in that way he hath appointed: Be not preſumptuous; go not a new way, nor make a Supplement to God's way in your Wiſdom.

6thly. Though we write as exactly after our Pattern as we can, yet we have *Failings enough that need his Mercy*: Let us take main care that we be right in Subſtance. But this I ſhall ſpeak more to hereafter.

7. If we miſcarry in this great Point of Mediation between God and us, we do Fruſtrate, Void, and Evacuate *the whole Purpoſe of God*; and God reconciling himſelf to Man by *Jeſus Chriſt*: And ſo we are left in the State of Creation: And ſo we are found under a Forfeiture; and we have no Promiſe at all from God; we have only guilty Conſciences. When we come to die, let any Man ſee if he can appear before God. Can he tell him he hath not ſinned; or that he hath made After-Recompence? This is the Caſe a Man will be left unto: And if we go to God in the falſe Mediation,

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we Void and Fruſtrate the whole Purpoſe of God; and you have guilty Man left to defend himſelf, God ſitting as Judge at the Great Day; to ſee if he can implead God. And this will be the Iſſue of not going to the One God, by that One Mediator, the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt*. Be punctual here: for if you fail here, you miſcarry finally. Diſc. VI.

DISCOURSE VII.

The Mediation of Chriſt, the Grand Inſtitution of God.

COL. 3. 17.

And whatſoever ye do in Word or Deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.

YOU have been told, that this is a principal Goſpel-Direction, how to go to God. Becauſe we act unnaturally to the Creation, in the Abuſe of our Liberty; the Goodneſs of God hath conſidered this contracted Neceſſity of ours. And ſince we are fallen into an Apoſtaſie, it pleaſed God to find out a way of Mediation; to come unto the One God, by the One Lord *Jeſus*. I do hope that there is none that will be ſo neglective of his Soul, that he will disbelieve this; or, believing it, will neglect it. I have ſhewn of what import it is. I dare ſay I have ſaid enough to awaken any Perſon that hath a care of his own Soul; and have told you, that it is the effect of God's Grace. I have told you how far ſober Reaſon and Natural Light will carry Diſc. VII.

Vol. III. carry a Man in a way of ſuitableneſs to entertain the Revelation of God. The laſt Day I came to ſome *Perſuaſions* to this, and Arguments diſſuaſive from adding any thing of our own to this. Let us not build upon God's Foundation Hay or Stubble; but that which is ſuitable to God's Foundation: which being built upon it, will continue.

III. That which I think next to be done is, To give you an Account of and juſtifie the Practice of the *Reformed Church*. I take the *Reformed Church* in the Latitude, ever ſince its coming off from the *Romiſh*. This is neceſſary to juſtifie our ſelves; becauſe there are ſeveral Separations from that which is the truly *Reformed Church*, and they challenge the Integrity of Reformation. Now I will give you an Account of what we do in four Particulars.

1. That the *Reformed Church* does profeſs to do all That in reſpect of God and his Worſhip, which is in it ſelf *Reaſonable*. And while it doth ſo, it hath a Warrant ſufficient; for this is to follow the Law of the Creation, and is according to that which the Rom. 12. 1. Apoſtle calls, the *Reaſonable Worſhip of God*. And whatſoever comes under the Name of *Reaſonable Worſhip*, is Worſhip according to God's Mind, and Joh. 4. 23. worthy of us. *God is a Spirit, and to be worſhipped in Spirit*, by Acts of the Mind and Underſtanding. Upon this Account we Pray to God, and Hear, whatſoever can be declared ſuitable to the Nature and Mind of God: And we do meditate and confer one with another. Theſe are great Things in Religion, and all juſtified upon this Foundation, *Reaſonable Worſhip*.

2. We do in the *Reformed Church* That which we have in Holy Scripture: For we, having the Holy Scripture to warrant us, we have theſe three things ſuperadded to Rational Worſhip. We go to God by the Mediation of *Chriſt*: We receive Bread

Bread and Wine in Memory of Chriſt's Death and Paſſion: As we uſe Water in Baptiſm to Acknowledge Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt. Diſc. VII.

3. We do thoſe things wherein *Both theſe* things do agree. The *Grace of God, which bringeth Salvation, teaches us, that denying Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, Righteouſly and Godly.* And ſo elſewhere: *Let us walk honeſtly, as in the Day.* *Honeſtly*, that ſpeaks to one Point: And then, *not in Rioting and Drunkenneſs*, &c. and thoſe ſpeak to Morals: Theſe are the *three Foundations* of what we do who are in the Reformed Church. Now the Tit. 2. 12. Rom. 13. 17.

4*th*. is this: Whatſoever is beſides this, is *Circumſtantial*. In the *Matter* of it, it is of an indifferent Nature: In the *Manner*, grave and ſeemly: In the *End*, maintaining Love and Charity. They are but Circumſtantials in Religion, mutable and changeable in Religion; as the Conveniencies and Security of the Church of God may require, and the maintaining of Charity among thoſe that profeſs Religion may require. God hath not ſecured the Chriſtian Church it ſhall ever have the Protection of Government: And among Chriſtians at Liberty, there was, in matters of indifferent Nature, a very great *Latitude*. They were not in outward Matters ſo ſtreight, as to be expoſed to the Cruelty of their Enemies; there was a great deal of Latitude. I make no queſtion, but in Rituals there is a very great Latitude and Liberty left, wherein we may ſhew Obedience to thoſe that are in Authority, whereby we may avoid their Offence and Diſpleaſure; and whereby we may attain Brotherly Love and Charity; which is a great End of Religion; living in Love among the Members of the Church. Nor is any thing ſo prejudicial to Charity, as *unneceſſary Separation*. Therefore it is adviſeable, by no

no means to affect to differ; every Degree of Separation begets an Alienation.

I diſtinguiſh in Religion between the Things that are *Good in themſelves*, and thoſe that are *Good in relation to other things*. The firſt are Immutable: Such as, Love to God, Faith in him, and true and real Goodneſs: Theſe, by their preſence, do ſanctifie a Man, and put him into a State of Salvation: Theſe are unalterable, unchangeable. But then, there are abundance of things *Good in order to theſe*: And I do not think any one of theſe doth conſiſt in a Point that may not be changed for the eſtabliſhing of Peace. Theſe are valued more or leſs, according as the Other do require: Such as theſe; The Meeting of Chriſtians, and the Modes and Ways of their Converſe. The conſideration of this Diſtinction I leave to your own Thoughts; but to me this is great Satisfaction.

Now all that we do in that part of the Church, which we call *Reformed*, comes under theſe *four*; you ſee how it is juſtified. And we do altogether diſapprove of the uſe of Images in the Worſhip of
Deut. 4. 12---16. God, as it is forbid in *Deuteronomy*. Obſerve now: Let thoſe from whom we are departed, give an account to the World, why they make uſe of ſuch Mediations as they do. But I would here diſtinguiſh between *Means* that Upright Perſons uſe as Helps, and *Means* that may operate upon God. If any One doth better diſpoſe his Mind to Prayer, or Meditation; by Faſting, Separation for a while from Company; he may uſe it: I ſee no Danger in it. But the Danger is, when we fancy ſuch a thing will recommend us to God, when God hath not ſaid ſo; this is Preſumption. In the *Reformed Church* there is both uſe of Forms of Prayer, and allowance for Conceived Prayer; and they are Both juſtified. As to *Forms of Prayer*, they are great Helps to our Wandring Mind; and then they

they are Proper and Succinct: Whereas Prayers suddenly conceived, are not so; are not always purely Prayer-Matter; which is of four sorts: Matter of Confession of Sin; Thankfulness to God for his Goodness; Acknowledging him in his Greatness, and our Dependance upon him; and Petitioning him for Grace. That that refers not to these four, is Extravagance in Prayer. I do observe a great deal in conceived Prayer is very Good, but may do better in the Sermon. Now this Advantage a Form of Prayer hath, that things are Proper and Succinct. The true Excellency of Prayer, is a sincere Intention of Mind in presenting our Thoughts to God. That that we of the Reformed Church maintain is, that the whole Deportment of the Man in the Body as well as Mind, ought to be such as shall express a Reverence of Deity. They are free enough from Superstition; they are not Will-Worshippers, in an evil Sense. For here is a Mistake; some Men think that all Will-Worship is condemned: I find it otherwise; *Which things have indeed a shew of Wisdom in Will-Worship, and Humility, and neglecting of the Body, not in any Honour to the satisfying of the Flesh.* I do not think the Will-Worship in that Text of Scripture, is spoken of in an ill Sense, but as an Excellency for us to put our selves forward, and come to that Account; *He that regardeth a Day, regardeth it unto the Lord,* &c. where he says, He that *regardeth not the Day, regardeth it not to the Lord.* He that regardeth not a Day, doth not sin; but he that doth it to the Lord, is acceptable. There is a Will-Worship upon this Account. *Eli* did wrong in controuling: And *Hannah prayed in her Heart; her Lips moving, but her Tongue not expressing her Mind.* So we ought no more to censure voluntary Expressions of Men in their Worship, than *Eli* ought to have censured *Hannah*: In none of these do we use false Mediation:

Disc. VII.

Col. 2. 23. ἔχοντα λόγον σοφίας ἐν ἐθελοθρησκείᾳ, &c.

Rom. 14. 6.

1 Sam. 1. 14.

on: But *theſe* voluntary Expreſſions of Affection ought not to be grievous to any; but all Men are to be left to their Liberty in them. *I keep under my Body, and bring it into Subjection:* Who ſhould reprove him for uſing the beſt way, that he finds by Experience, to qualifie himſelf? Who ſhall blame *Job* for *making a Covenant with his Eyes?* And ſo *David: I challenged my Soul with Faſting.* He that doth not do ſo, doth not ſin; therefore it is Weakneſs to challenge every voluntary Expreſſion of Affection, as Will-Worſhip. So far as a Man agrees with others in Externals, it is commendable in him; becauſe thereby he doth maintain Love and Good-will.

1 Cor. 9. 27.

Phil. 4. 8.

Job 31. 1.

Pſal. 69. 10, 11.

Thus I have given you an Account, that there is nothing I find, either as to Principle or Practice, in the *Reformed Church*, that doth in the leaſt intrench upon Chriſt's Prieſtly Office; or is a Superaddition to God's Inſtitution. For what we do, we juſtifie, either by *Reaſon*, or by *God's Inſtitution*; or we have *Both* for it; or they are only Matters of *Circumſtance*, and do not amount to the degree of Recommending us to God: And in them we do well to maintain Love (not offering Violence to our Conſciences) to agree; Theſe being no part of the Apoſtaſie, of which we are forewarned every one that loves his Soul, to depart from, and beware of.

IV. The fourth Uſe, is a Uſe of Information. (1.) Concerning the Truth of our *Condition* in reſpect of God: (2.) Concerning our *Recovery* to God.

1. For the *Condition* that we are in, reſpectively to God. This Point tells us, we are out of Grace and Favour; we are at a Loſs. And if we are ſo, it becomes us to know our ſelves; ſo that we may deprecate; and we might know what. We are extreamly

treamly given to Self-flattery; but, *none but Fools would live in a Lye.* It is too general for Men to give way to Preſumption, and live greatly in a Lye; and abide very little in the Truth. But it is not ſafe here; becauſe our great Concernment lies here. If we are not Atheiſts, we muſt go to Chriſt. This Point informs us, that in reſpect of our ſelves we are at a loſs. We have *miſcarried*; How can we expect to be received? 'Tis true, we have Encouragement enough by the Goſpel; but we muſt go in the way of God's Direction. We having this Knowledge, it will not be hurtful; ſince we have the Knowledge of Attonement made by the Blood of Chriſt. Diſc. VII.

2. We have here a true Repreſentation of the way *and Means of our Recovery, God in Chriſt Reconciling the World unto himſelf, not imputing Treſpaſſes.* God looking upon us, not as we are in our Selves, but as we are gathered together to *Chriſt* as a Head. In the *Myſtical Body*, the Head is as truly Influential, as the Natural Head is influential and beneficial to the Members of the Natural Body. Fallen Man hath admittance to the Throne of Grace, coming in the Name of the Lord Jeſus. This is the *new and living way*: Our being received of God upon Chriſt's Recommendation. This we owe to our Head; to the Goodneſs of God, and to our Head. Chriſt is given to us, by his Perſon for Recommendation; by his Spirit, to Guide us. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Heb. 10. 19, &c.

V. There remains a uſe of *Exhortation*; that is, to *Follow God's direction.* Will any one think that God hath done this in vain? Is not God in earneſt, that will do ſuch a Thing as this, to the admiration of Angels, to the wonder of the World? The Exhortation is, that we would give up our ſelves to *God's Direction*; and ſubſcribe to the Wiſdom of God. Let it be the voice of every Soul, in anſwer to this, *Lord let it be to my Soul accord-*

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ing to thy Word: Accept of me in and through thy Son. This is not a matter of Notion only; but it is in order to practice. If we do not go to God in Chriſt's Name, we fall ſhort: Therefore we muſt not paſs this over, as a piece of Knowledge, that is not to be drawn down into Practice, but we muſt make Uſe of it for the ſatisfaction of our Minds, in a Rational way. We muſt have a Thankful ſenſe of God's Goodneſs; and whenever we go to God, make Uſe of Chriſt's Name. Among thoſe that had not the Light of the Goſpel, the great Queſtion was, whence comes Evil to overflow the Creation of God? And Men of any tollerable Information, and Intellectual Improvement; have thought, that God, moved by his own Goodneſs, ſome way or other, would be Reconciled to Man. This hath been their expectation. *Eve* was ſo confident of the Promiſe, *the Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpent's Head*, that ſhe thought that her
Gen. 4. 1. Firſt-born was he: therefore ſhe ſaith, *I have gotten the Man, the Lord.* So it may be better read. And Chriſt was the *Deſire of all Nations.* Let us make a juſt uſe of Chriſt; and in a way of Self-denyal, and Self-Renunciation, let us depend upon Chriſt for Recommendation, for our Acceptance.

Phil. 2. 10. *At the Name of Jeſus every Knee ſhall bow, to God. And there is one Mediator between God and Man.* All muſt be done in that Name, becauſe there is no other Name given under Heaven whereby we can be ſaved. Now let us not be wiſe in our own Eyes; and by pretended Wiſdom, fall ſhort of God's Salvation. *Do all in the Name of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; always bow the Knee to God, in the Name of the Lord Jeſus. I do obſerve in Hiſtory of all times, that thoſe in all places, in all Ages, that have been any thing raiſed in their Intellects, or Refined in their Morals, have expected ſome way from God whereby he ſhould ſave Sinners. If we were as

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Real in matters of Religion, as in other matters, we ſhould find a Neceſſity of ſome Mediation with God, as They have done. And in Anſwer to this, the Scripture calls Chriſt the *Deſire of all Nations*. If he was not the Voice of their Souls, I am ſure he was the Voice of their Neceſſity. Now, let not us do as madly as the *Jews* have done before us. They, and their Progenitors talked of a *Meſſias*, and expected Him, and argued much about Him: But when he came, they Underſtood Him not; and Neglected Him; Let not us do ſo too. But let us make a juſt uſe of Him, and receive him for Juſtification, by being Recommended to God by him. Let us be willing to be as much beholden to Chriſt, as he is ready to Gratifie us. Chriſt is the great Favourite in the Court of Heaven; and is willing to do us Courteſies, and gain us admittance into his Fathers Preſence. Therefore let us be as willing to go to God by Him; Underſtanding that Chriſt's Name is our great Addreſs. It is ſtrange that we ſhould need entreaty to be ſo gratified. We are ſenſeleſs of our own Neceſſity ſure, or elſe we ſhould not need to be ſo entreated. For there is nothing ſhort in this Foundation; the only fault is our Neglect and Unbelief. For, *if any one come to God by me*, (ſaith Chriſt) *He will in no wiſe caſt him out*. We do not enough conſider what Power with himſelf God hath admitted us unto, in bidding us to come to Him in his Son. It is the greateſt advantage a neceſſitous Creature can have: When we go by Chriſt, we go as Perſons endued with Power from above: We are taught of God, to come to him by his Son. It is called the teaching of God. We deal with God, not as upon our Own account, but as Recommended to God by Chriſt; and as looked upon by God as the Adoption of his Grace. If we come in his Name, and pray to God to look upon us as the Adoption

Diſc. VII.

Joh. 6. 37.

Vol. III. of his Grace; and conſider his Son's interpoſure; here is a new Ground of Faith. We deal with God not upon our own Account; but come to him by the Guidance of his own Spirit. And God bleſſeth us when we come Cloathed in the Garment of our Elder Brother. Let us do all our Service as well as we can; and with Dilligence, Exactneſs and Care; and refer all to God's Goodneſs, declared in Chriſt. Let us not turn the Grace of God into Wantonneſs, ſo as to encourage our ſelves to Remiſſneſs in our Duty and Holy Service: But let us uſe our beſt Dilligence and Care. But when we have done our beſt, let us then Offer up our ſelves to the Grace and Goodneſs of God declared in *Jeſus Chriſt*; and let us build upon the Intereſt of Chriſt. In thus doing, we ſhall no where Neglect God. But ſince this is the main uſe of the point, anſwerable Performance is neceſſary: And I ſhall Reinforce it with divers Arguments.

1. The conſideration of our *Failure and Neceſſity.* And truly if we did know our Selves, we would ſay, that this ſupply is very accommodate; and the Recommendation to God is of great Neceſſity: The caſe with us is Poverty and Miſchief, which is brought upon us by our Diſobedience to God. This is an Offence and Abomination to God; this we are to provide againſt. How ſhall we provide againſt it, but by a Recommendation, gathering us together under a Head of Recommendation, the Head of the Church, the *Lord Jeſus Chriſt*? Wherefore we have that that *Job* (who is upon record for patience) ſaid, *I am vile, what ſhall I anſwer thee*, &c? Job. 42. 6. And again, *I abhor my ſelf in Duſt and Aſhes.* After he had reaſoned his Caſe out to the utmoſt and Defended himſelf; yet when God appears, and he comes to a view of his own State, immediately between God and Himſelf, then he ſaith, *I am vile*, and *I abhor my ſelf.* Whoſoever Sins; every Sin is either

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an Immorality, or elſe a manifeſt Falling off from the Divine Will; and ſaying to God himſelf, that we Owe him nothing. Now this is the Interpretation of Sin; either One or Other of them; and ſometimes Both. Now, doth any one think, that he that is Guilty of this high Exorbitancy, in a State of contradiction againſt God, that he can continue in good Terms with God? No. None in the whole Creation of God is Able, or Worthy to bring Himſelf, or any elſe into Favour with God. It is only proper to him who may without Arrogancy account *it no robbery to be equal with God.* We live in a Lye, if we conceit otherwiſe than thus. God and a Sinner comes not together immediately, but by means of an Interceſſor. Diſt. VII. Phil. 2: 6.

2. The conſideration of *Chriſts Fitneſs* and Sufficiency. Who ſo fit as the Natural Son of God to bring into Favour the Adopted Sons of God? What ſo fit as the eternal Reaſon, to reform the Reaſonable Creature. None like Him: No ſo fit Mediator: If we conſider the Height of his Perſon; the Integrity of his Nature; his near Relation to God; and then his Conjunction with us: Or if we conſider the Intention of his Prieſtly Office, which was voluntarily aſſumed. If the Height of his *Perſon: Equal with God: In him dwelt the fulneſs of the God-Head.* If we ſpeak of the Integrity of his Nature, while we retain Innocence and Integrity, we are valuable; or if his *Conjunction* with us, he is able to fit himſelf to us; and was found in the form of a Man: Then he was in all things like as we are, ſave only Sin. Having an unchangeable Prieſt-hood; *He is able to ſave to the utmoſt all that come to God by Him.* He came into the World, to bring home Children to God. Our own Contrivances amount to no more, than Cloathing our ſelves with Fig-Leaves. But Chriſt is *the Lord our Righteouſneſs:* Chriſt is made a Common Head, where- Heb. 7: 25. Jer. 23: 6. & 33: 16. Eph. 1. 10. Ἀνακεφαλαιόω.

wherein all that receive the Goſpel, meet. He hath gathered all together in Him.

3. The conſideration of *Chriſt's willingneſs* and readineſs. He hath, in Good-will, taken upon him the Office of a Mediator; which he will diſcharge in his own Perſon. He will not truſt any Creature with it; not the higheſt Angel. Chriſt in his Perſon, and Chriſt by his Spirit, doth all for us, and in us. So that there cannot be any failing, becauſe it doth not paſs through many Hands. Can we doubt that he will fail in the Glorious part of his Office; when as the Suffering and Humiliation part of his Office is over? He humbled himſelf to the Death of the Croſs; and he is riſen again for our Juſtification. Will he fail now? Who can think he will? He hath performed the worſt, the hardeſt part; will he not readily Recommend thoſe Perſons to God's Grace and Favour, to whom he bore ſo great Good-will? If Chriſtian Faith fail not, Chriſt will not fail: He will do the Better part of that, the worſer part of which is paſt already. It is eaſie to believe He will perform the part of an Advocate. The greateſt complaint we find in Scripture, is, That *Man* will not make uſe of Chriſt. *How often would I have gathered you. Come unto me, that ye may have Life. I beſeech you receive not the Grace of God in vain. Now is the day of Salvation. Take heed that you fail not to enter into his Reſt. I beſeech you, by the meekneſs and gentleneſs of Chriſt.* What Arguments are here? It will appear hereafter, when there ſhall be ſo many Evidences ſhewn of Chriſt's Willingneſs, that *Mens Deſtruction is of themſelves.* When the great number that ſhall Periſh ſhall appear, it ſhall Teſtifie, that it was *Love of Sin*, and the *Turning the Grace of God into Wantonneſs*, and *the Evil Heart* of Unbelief, that deſtroyed them.

Mat. 23. 37. Joh. 10. 10. 2 Cor. 16. 2. Heb. 4. 1. 2 Cor. 10. 1.

4. *God:*

4. *God's Expectation.* God hath suffered himself to be at great cost about Man's Redemption. Do not you think, but God hath great Expectation of a good Event. *Oh, wherefore is the price in the hand of a Fool, when he knows not how to use it! God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son,* &c. And can we think that those, to whom he gave his Son, but that they should be better for Him? It will be a very heavy account for Men, if their Gain by Christ do not hold a fit proportion to their Opportunity. Do you think that God doth not Expect, that the World should be the better for his Son? When he reflects upon the Provision that he hath made, and find Man not Redeemed, after a price of Redemption paid; will not this be a Frustration to God's Expectation? Disc. VII. Pro. 17. 16. Joh. 3. 16.

5. The *Guidance of the holy Spirit.* I Summon in Heaven and Earth; the Fulness of God and emptiness of Man; to believe in this case the Guidance of the Holy Spirit. The *Comforter shall come, and He shall receive of mine, and shew it to you.* By Christ's Spirit He speaks to the case of our contracted Necessity and Impotence; for we are endued with the Spirit from above, we have Strength from God; for our Salvation is the Contrivance from Heaven; and there is assistance enough through the Guidance of the Spirit. Joh. 16. 14.

6. Our *own high Concernment.* It is of that Importance to us, as an Antidote is against Poyson ignorantly taken; as a Cordial in a Fainting Fit, or a Crown of Triumph after a conflict with the Devil, the World and Sin.

If *these* be but laid together and considered, there is no considerate Mind can be unsatisfied. But,

Lastly, the consideration of the noble *Design of Christ* when he came into our Nature, is important.

1. To rid the World of *Idolatry* and all false Worship.

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2. To discharge it from the troublesome *Ceremonies* that were in the *Jewish* Pedagogy.

3. To begin and advance in us the *Divine Life.*

1. The design of Christ was, to rid the World of all *Idolatry*, and all false Worship. For it is a work Unprofitable and Vain; when all is done, nothing is done, to Worship Idols. If you call upon them all day, cut your selves, build Altars with *Balaam*, remove from place to place, all is lost Labour. In Idolatry, the better Services, the worse. That the Idolater doth, Dishonour himself, make himself believe in That that is the Work of Mens hands: So that this is one design of the *Messias*, To rid the World of Idolatry.

2. To discharge us of those burthensome *Institutions* of the *Mosaical Law*. Now we are rid of all those *unprofitable* Rites. I dare call them so, because God calls them so. Now instead of them, we have Faith, and Going to God in the Name of Christ.

3. To begin, and Advance in us the *Divine Life*, which is the high Improvement of the whole Creation: *Partakers of the Divine Nature*; the Scripture warrants to use it.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

Now if you duly Consider *these Arguments*, I doubt not but you will be willing to Go to God by him; and wholly to depend upon him, and Renounce Self-confidence; and wholly to acknowledge God in the use of his Son's Recommendation. And then, taking in the Assistance of the Divine Spirit, we are Compleat.

DIS-

DISCOURSE VIII.

The Arguments by which Men ſhould be perſuaded to Reconcile unto God.

2 COR. 5. 20.

Now then we are Ambaſſadors for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us, we pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.

MAN hath an Indiſpoſition God-ward, which doth expoſe him to the greateſt Danger: But here is great Hope in *Iſrael* in this Particular. Open your Ears therefore, and attend to the Voice of Heaven. You are entreated to be reconciled. Let us admire this Miracle of Divine Goodneſs! *God doth by us, beſeech you to be reconciled: We pray you in the Name of Chriſt, be reconciled to God.* It is the ſame as if a Sovereign ſhould entreat a Malefactor to receive a Pardon. It is an Obſervation true concerning the whole World: The Calamitous and Neceſſitous are not wont to be entreated to receive an Alms; or accept a Benefit. But we find, through the Goodneſs of God, it is otherwiſe here. *God beſeecheth us to be reconciled. We pray you in Chriſts ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.* Diſc. VIII.

We account it our Honour, and for our Credit, to Controul, to Cruſh, to be Revenged when Injury and Wrong is done to us: But *God* thinks it Good, and that which is worthy of himſelf, and that which doth become him, to wooe us by Love,

and to pity the Neceſſities of the miſerable. There are but few Men in the World to whom it is acceptable, that any one ſhould interpoſe or offer Terms of Reconciliation: He is an exceeding good Man that will go ſo far, and admit of equal Satisfaction. But if there were not more in Divine Clemency than this, we ſhould be without all Hope; our Caſe would be deſperate. This is enough to enamour our Souls of God. In theſe Words we will obſerve three Particulars.

1. That the Motion of Reconciliation *begins with God.* He is the Forward, and Active, and Leading Party, in this great Buſineſs of Reconciliation. And this declares his great Goodneſs; for nothing declares Goodneſs ſo much as Clemency, Benignity and Compaſſion.

2. Though the Motion of Reconciliation begins with God, yet God expects *our Concurrence and Conſent.* Reconciliation is never accompliſhed without us; without ſome voluntary Act of Man. We cannot be happy but by that which is our own Choice: For that which is not our Choice, will be our Burden. There is nothing of Happineſs where there is Violence and Force. That which will make us ſound, muſt be inwardly received and concocted: For no outward Application will make a Man ſound. It is ſo in Naturals and Spirituals. We being made Rationals, are alſo made happy by the Improvement of our Principles: Therefore we cannot be happy without ſome Act of our own; and that muſt be an Act of Underſtanding what God is; how Good; That he is our Center, and we receive him by Love and Good-will, and account our ſelves accompliſhed by him.

3. God in this Motion of Reconciliation *Accommodates himſelf to Humane Principles*; which are two; Intelligence and Freedom. By theſe we ſtand Head and Shoulders higher than the whole Creation

on below us: by theſe we bear the Image of God, and walk in an Equipage with the Angels. And to theſe Principles God applies himſelf. This you have in the Words. Diſc. VIII.

God calls upon us to be reconciled in the Name of Chriſt: And his Ambaſſadors ſpeak in his Name; So it *begins* on God's Part: And this declares his great Goodneſs to us.

There muſt be a *Concurrence on our part*: Be *ye* Reconciled to God. For it is a vain thing to perſwade a Man to that which is not at all in his Power: *Be ye reconciled to God.* This calls for an Act from us, for the Conſent of our Minds for that which we have. This is plain in the Words. For there were no Cauſe of ſuch a Call, if there were not an Ability in us to do ſomething on our part.

God doth in this Motion *accommodate* Himſelf *to Humane Principles.* Here is Addreſs made to a Perſon that hath Intelligence and Underſtanding; and alſo Liberty and Freedom: *Be ye reconciled to God.*

He gives us that Supply of Grace that is neceſſary. God moves gently and fairly: but he doth not mean, neither will he move with reaſonable Creatures forcibly; he will never uſe Violence. For it is not poſſible to be reconciled to God without our Conſent, no more than for a Perſon to enter into Matrimony, ſaying no, or ſaying nothing. There cannot be an Act of Faith, or Repentance without us. Thus God is the Active Party, and moves ſuitable to our Principles.

But here is an Expectation of what is to be done *on our part.* You will ſay, this is ſtrange; Is there any Act of ours that is ſo conſiderable? It is the Reaſon of the Caſe: The contrary is as if you ſhould tell us of dry Water, or cold Fire; things that are repugnant and contradictory. It is ſaid, *Awake*

thou

thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give thee Light. God doth awake; but we are
Eph. 5. 14. thoſe that are awakened: This doth impart God's Precedency, and our Concurrence. Again: *Work*
Phil. 2. 12, 13. *out your Salvation with Fear and Trembling: For it is God which worketh in you both to Will and to do of his good pleaſure. To will and to do*, expreſſes All; and yet we *work out our own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.* Firſt *God* doth awaken Mens Minds, and diſpoſe their Wills, and then ſtrengthens them with further Aſſiſtance; that they may not will in vain. Thus ſaith St. *Auſtin*: A Man would never move towards God, if God did not move him; but being once moved, we are to proceed.

Now to give you ſome Inſtances, that God is the firſt Active Party in the Buſineſs of Reconciliation.

1. And the *firſt Inſtance* to make it appear as Matter of fair Belief, that God is the Leading Party, and moſt forward in bringing about the Reconciliation of God and Man, is from the Conſideration of the *Divine Nature*, which is Goodneſs, infinite Goodneſs. *God is as Good as Good can be*; and will not fail in any Act of Goodneſs. He will do as much as Goodneſs requires to be done. Now the effect of Goodneſs is to communicate. We cannot conceive any Inſtance of Goodneſs that is truly ſo, that is wanting in God: And the natural effect of Goodneſs is to be communicative.

2. The *Voluntary Declaration* that God hath made of his Mind and Will. And this we have abundantly in Scripture. *Why will ye die, O Houſe of*
Ezek. 18. 31. *Iſrael!* And, *What could I have done more for my*
Iſa. 5. 4. *Vineyard that I have not done in it:* And in the New
Joh. 3. 16. Teſtament: *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life. God is not will-*
1 Tim. 2. 4. *ing that any ſhould periſh; but would have all Men to*

be

be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth. I could produce many more Scriptures concerning this Matter, Man's Recovery and Reconciliation to God. Diſc. VIII.

And this I further add; you need not fear; nay you do not do God Right, unleſs you amplifie and enlarge his Sayings to the uttermoſt of your Underſtanding: In the Words of his Grace, there is more in God's Underſtanding than our Form of Words can contain; or our impefect Apprehenſion can conceive. Therefore fear not to amplifie and enlarge the Words of God's Grace, if you keep within the Confines of the Caſe that God ſpeaks to. And God promiſes to compaſſionate any compaſſionable Caſe. Not the impenitent and Contumacious; but the Penitent, and thoſe that leave off to Sin, and return to their Duty, go to God for Forgiveneſs in and through Chriſt.

Now, that the *Declarations* of God are infallibly true and certain, you have theſe *three* Demonſtrations.

1. *God cannot Lye.* It is as neceſſary that God be True, as that he be God: For if not True, he is not God. *It is impoſſible that God ſhould lye.* Saith the Holy Scripture, *God that cannot lye.* Tit. 1. 2. Heb. 6. 18.

2. To *Diſſemble* proceeds from Narrowneſs of Spirit: Whoſoever doth diſſemble, is a Perſon of a narrow and a baſe Spirit; hath nothing generous in him; and drives on a petty Deſign, and ſome ſorry End. And theſe things are too low, too mean, and too ſhallow, to have any place in God. He is too great, and too big, to drive on a petty Deſign. He is Univerſal Goodneſs.

3. *No* imaginable *Reaſon* can be given that God ſhould *Deceive* his Creature. It is too unworthy to have any place in God, to triumph over Miſery: Theſe things are below him; they are Unworthy of him. It is loathſome and abominable, and *Illudere miſeris.*

ſhews

ſhews the Emptineſs of a Perſon. Far be it from God to be ſo idly baſe; to be Declaring, when he is not Intending.

I will make this appear in three Particulars, that God doth not deceive his Creatures in the Invitation that he makes by the Promiſes of Grace.

1. God hath *no Neceſſity* at all to flatter or to deceive. God is not in danger from all, or any of his Creatures, that he ſhould be put upon ſuch a thing, to keep them from Rebellion. This is the Caſe of ſome Princes; but it is not God's Caſe. His Self-ſufficiency and Sovereignty puts him out of all Fear: He is always cloathed with Omnipotency.

2. God hath *no Intereſt* againſt his Creatures Good: For God is not the leſs happy, nor ſuffers any thing for the Creatures being Happy; no more than a Parent is unhappy by his Child's thriving and growing great, which is his own Glory. I dare ſay of God, that it is highly pleaſing to him, to ſee his Creatures thrive under him. *If ye then, being Evil, i. e.* leſs good, *know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more ſhall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.* You that are Evil; if you know how to give good things to your Children, how much more will God give his Holy Spirit to thoſe that ask him? God there ſaith, it is as unnatural to him to deny his Spirit to any one that ask it, as for a Parent to give a Scorpion for a Fiſh, or a Stone for Bread.

Luk. 11. 13.

3. Clearneſs and Fairneſs *pleaſes God beſt.* It was grievous to God, that there was a Miſcarriage in Paradiſe: And Goodneſs could not reſt till there was a Remedy; and a Declaration of it to Mankind. For the Goſpel was preached by God's own Mouth to them in Paradiſe, in theſe Words; *The Seed of the Woman ſhall break the Serpents Head.*

But,

But, to cloſe this Matter in *Five Particulars*; *viz.* to reconcile theſe things, the Influence of God's Grace in our Converſion, with the Freedom of Man's Mind, notwithſtanding the Impotency of our Nature contracted by the Fall. Diſt. VIII.

1. *Abandoned* for ever be it from the thoughts of *Man*, that he is *alone an Abſolute cauſe* of any Good: Therefore never leave God out. It is not attributed to any Man, that he is Self-ſufficient. Always both ſay, and think, and do *in the Name of the Lord. Truſt in the Lord with all thy Heart; and lean not to thine own Underſtanding.* Theſe Words will lead a Man into Humble thoughts of himſelf. Prov. 3. 5.

2. It is to be believed, and truſted upon, (or elſe the Goſpel is to no purpoſe) yea, you may venture your Soul upon it; That *God is prepared* and is *moſt Ready* to lead them by the Hand, who wait upon him, and whoſe Eyes are up to him; who expect from Him, and depend upon him. If a Man turn his Thoughts God-ward, and have deſire after him, and be willing to entertain Terms of Reconciliation; as ſure as God hath made any Promiſe in the Bible, ſo ſure is it that God will aſſiſt us, and take us by the Hand, and carry us on: There is no doubt of this, that if Men be in Motion God-ward, God will be with them. This I prove from *Job. God looketh upon Men, and if any ſay, I have Sinned and perverted that which was right and it profited me not; He will deliver his Soul from going into the Pit, and his Life ſhall ſee the Light. He looks upon Men.*] He that looks for a thing, it will be acceptable to him when it comes: If God looks for Mens Return, He will joyn with Men, when they do return. *And if any Man ſay*] no Man is left out. *I have Sinned*] and who can ſay leſs? and *perverted that which is right*] that follows of it ſelf; for there is a perverting in every Tranſgreſſion. And *it profited me not.*] *What profit have you*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *of thoſe* Job 33. 27, 28.

things

things whereof you are aſhamed? This is all an hearty Acknowledgment. And *God will deliver his Soul from Death; and his Life ſhall ſee the Light.*] Now ſee, if this Scripture doth not Warrant a Man to build upon this; *That God is ready for every One that comes to him.* Now if we do not ſtir, then we put a ſtop to God; and can any one complain, that he cannot have that which he doth nothing toward the getting of? So all Mouths are ſtopped before God.

Rom. 6. 21.

3. In the Strength of *Grace received*, we may Act to purpoſe, though in the loweſt degree, the leaſt that we can Imagine; we may effectually, and to purpoſe diſpoſe and make uſe of it: For no Grace of God is in vain. If it be not enough for the thorough Buſineſs; yet it is enough for the firſt and leading act. This I take for granted, becauſe God doth not Trifle. Where he gives the leaſt Grace, it is ſufficient for the Effect for which it is given: Every degree of Grace afforded by God, is ſufficient for that, for which God aims it: For otherwiſe it is not Grace. Therefore if it be Divine Help, it hath in it ſufficient for the act for which it is given: And ſo you ſhall find. There were given *one Talent*, *two Talents*, *five Talents*: If the one Talent did not bring with it Power of its own Improvement, the Perſon could not be Condemned. The Scripture warrants the Propoſition, that every degree of Grace is improveable to the Act for which it was given.

Matt. 25. 27.

4. *We do not Merit Grace* at all: Neither the firſt nor the middle, nor the laſt: but the gift of Grace is purely the effect of Divine Goodneſs. We deſerve not, that God ſhould take our Neceſſities into conſideration. Neither We, nor our Fathers did Merit the *Meſſiah*: For the *Meſſiah* was exhibited in as bad a time as ever was. For was there any Faith upon the Earth, when he came? But it

was

was a Promiſe that God had made; and He would not be hindered, be the World never ſo bad. It was purely the effect of Divine Goodneſs and Clemency. We live by Grace, and from this we promiſe our ſelves, becauſe God is Goodand Gracious. *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the Wiſe Man glory in his Wiſdom, neither let the Mighty Man glory in his Might; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches. But let him that Glorieth, glory in this, that he Underſtandeth, and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exerciſe Loving Kindneſs, Judgment and Righteouſneſs in the Earth:* No Merit at all; but all is the Effect of Divine Goodneſs. Diſc. VIII. Jer. 9. 23, 24.

5. Tho' there be no Merit, yet through the Goodneſs of God, the *Improvement* of Grace formerly received, will be purſued with the giveing in of *further Grace.* God will not give over, nor leave us while we are in Motion. *He that begins a good Work, will perform it,* (or will finiſh it) *until the day of Jeſus Chriſt.* He will go on, if we do not obſtruct and hinder, if we do not fall off before the Buſineſs be done. He that hath Five Talents, and Improves them, ſhall have more: He that hath Two, and Improves them, ſhall have more: He that hath but One, and Improves it not, ſhall have it taken away. This I prove from that paſſage of Scripture. *To him that hath, more ſhall be given.* [*Hath*] there ſignifies, hath effectual ſo as to uſe. He that hath and uſeth, to him ſhall be given. *For he that holds Truth in Unrighteouſneſs; hath,* but not as is here meant: *Hath* in this place is *Uſeth*; and in other Places. Therefore you may make account, there is a great matter in theſe Words, you have them ſo often in Scripture; *To him that hath, ſhall be given?* To him that hath received ſome Meaſure of Grace, tho' the leaſt; and hath done ſomething for the Improvement of it, ſhall thro' the Grace of God, be given a greater Meaſure. And this may encourage you in your Endeavors. Phil. 1. 6. Matt. 25. 29. Lu. 8. 18.

Look

Look not upon the whole Courſe of Religion that you are to run until your dying Day; for then, it may be, your preſent Grace will appear too little. But look upon the firſt that is to be done, withdrawing from the Vanity of the World, and leaving off to Sin; and *this* the firſt Grace will enable you to begin. And then think, when this good Motion of Reconciliation is a-foot, that God, who did begin it, will, of his Grace, appear the ſecond time; and ſo will, from time to time, in ſeveral Inſtances of our Life, make ſeveral different Applications. Therefore doubt not to begin, tho' thou haſt but the leaſt of Grace now: For, after a fair Beginning, through the Help of Grace received, there will a further Addition of Grace. As there is Grace Beginning, ſo there will be Grace Promoting; and Grace Conſummating. This is neceſſary Matter of Faith: And he that hath not this, I am afraid he hath an Evil Heart of Unbelief: and that Satan may prevail with him, to his utter Deſtruction. Theſe *Five* Particulars ſpeak to all thoſe Three Points: The Influence of *God's Grace* in our Converſion: The *Freedom* of Man's Mind: And the *Impotency* of our Nature vitiated by the Fall; for we are naturally Impotent through Guilt contracted. It is Matter of lamentable Experience; and it becomes us to be ſenſible of it. But we muſt not ſo far extend it, as to ſay a Man is thereby become a Stone. For in the Confidence that *God is with us*, we may go on, and defie the Devil, and the whole World. And theſe Five Propoſitions are ſuch, in which the moſt Ingenuous Spirited on all ſides (ſo far as I have made ſearch) do agree: And therefore theſe things are like to be certain; I am ſure they are Sovereign. To conclude with a Saying of St. *Auguſtin* (a great Controller of all Arrogancy:) Take away the Grace, and Goodneſs, and Loving-kindneſs of *God*; you take away that from *God* where-

Tolle gratiam, non eſt quo Deus ſervare poſſit; Tolle liberum arbitrium, non eſt quod ſalvare poſſet.

whereby he is able to do you good: And deny the Freedom of *Man's* Mind, and you take away from God his Power to command. Therefore theſe things muſt have a due Place: A juſt ſenſe of Man's natural Impotency: An Acknowledgment of the Freedom of *Man's Mind*; and dependance upon the preſence of God's Grace. Diſc. VIII.

I might add here, That in the thing it ſelf, there is Repugnancy, for a Man being Happy without his own choice and delight. A Man cannot be made whole with Phyſick, if Nature doth not concurr with it. Things that are thruſt upon Men, and impoſed upon them, are grievous. All impoſition is a Burthen, if it be not admitted by the Perſons conſent. Two Parties cannot be Reconciled, when One ſtands off and does no Act giving conſent.

I have now done with the firſt thing, That God is the *Leading Party*; wherein we have abundant Aſſurance concerning God's readineſs and forwardneſs to this great buſineſs of Reconciliation, in which we are ſo much concerned; from the *Goodneſs* of God, which is the prime and proper Perfection of his Nature; ſo that effects of Goodneſs do as eaſily flow from him, as a giving Light from the Body of the Sun: From the *Declarations* that God hath made of himſelf, the Voluntary Manifeſtations of his Mind and Will; as alſo from the great *Preparations* that he hath made in order to the Reconciliation of himſelf to Man. Of theſe, amonſt many others, is the *Incarnation* of his Son, Divinity inhabiting Humane Nature, on purpoſe to Work out what is contrary to the Divine Nature; and to work in us what is ſuitable to the Divine Perfection: Then the conſtant *Mediation* of Chriſt for the Procuring Grace and Favour towards us: And the Operation of the Divine *Spirit* in us: And then by aſſured *Revelation* of all this to us by Holy Scripture. So that there

needs nothing for our Encouragement, or Enablement, on God's Part. Let not us now fail; Let us Anſwer, let us make a return, let us contribute on our part, though never ſo weak, never ſo frail, never ſo little; ſo it be but our contribution, ſo it be but the Anſwer of our Souls to the Voice of God. Let us not fail herein, and our Souls ſhall live. So that you may ſee here you have abundant Proof in this matter, above any Proof in the World. There is nothing the Heart of Man can Wiſh on Gods Part, but it hath been given upon as good account as can be. Now ſhall *We* be Wanting to this Salvation? ſhall we, by groſs Neglect, and living in Iniquity, ſay, that the Grace of God ſhall not take effect in us?

Now as I have ſhewed you that God is the Leading Party, I will alſo ſhew you how *backward we* are; the more the ſhame. I will not do you Wrong, but ſhew both of my ſelf, and you, how thwart and croſs we are under the Operation of Grace. And the truth is thus. *Three* things are to be ſaid on our Part, to ſhew that we are very Backward, though called upon and invited; though Endued with Power from above, in reſpect of the voluntary contribution of Grace.

1. We are really Unwilling, averſe, untoward, croſs and indiſpoſed.

2. We are Careleſs and *Negligent*: And where the Principle is careleſs, all things go to wrack.

3. We voluntarily commit Sin, and *conſent to Iniquity*. And whoſoever doth give a free conſent to that which in his own Judgment he knows or thinks he ought not to do, he doth an Act of *Defiance* againſt God: He doth declare, that he needs not his Mercy, that he will ſtand it out againſt Him to the laſt. Thus is every Act of Contradiction againſt the Reaſon of a Man's own Mind. I leave every one to his own Conſcience: For though

though I do acknowledge, that the Beſt of Men have many indiſpoſitions, and fail in the good Government of their Minds (all which are incident to Humane Nature, and make no breach between God and us) yet it becomes us to be Watchful in reſpect of theſe, to be Humble, Sober and Modeſt, and daily to importune God for Strength. But for the One degree I do not judge it to be the Practiſes of the Saints, but the Courſe of the Wicked World, *To conſent to known Sin.* But for the other, there is none of us can waſh our Hands of it. But how ſhall we *Remedy* this? The firſt way to avoid an Evil, is to know it, and to know the Cauſe and Occaſion of it. I will admoniſh you of the Cauſe of this Neglect of God and Careleſneſs; and I will inſiſt on *ſix* things. Diſc. VIII.

1. We delight to *Gratifie Senſe*, and eaſily comply with our Bodily Temper. Mens Manners do follow their Humours; as the Bodily State is, ſo is the Frame of the Mind, unleſs Wiſdom govern. A Man by Wiſdom, may overcome his bodily Temper. It is an Excellent Story we have of *Socrates*: One Skilled in Phiſiognomy, ſaid he was a Proud and a Peeviſh, a Wrathful and a Luſtful Man: The Friends of *Socrates* that knew him, they deſie this Phiſiognomer: But *Socrates* he qualifies them, and ſaith, all this that he ſpake of him was True; but, ſaith he, theſe things are ſubjected by the Reaſon of my Mind. Hence it is that Men ſink into Senſuality, and Brutiſhneſs.

2. We are more apt to *Live the Life of our Body* than of our *Spirit*. Motion doth follow the Predominant Element. If Gravity be the Predominant Quality; the Motion is downward: If Levity, then upward. Now here Motion follows the Body, more then the Spirit. This hath been complain'd of by the Noble Philoſophers; Imagination

on and Fancy do mingle themſelves with the Motion of pure Intellect. Therefore they propounded divers ways to ſeparate theſe; for certainly it is Unnatural, that we live the lower Life: No Creature below Man doth. For other Creatures live their Higheſt Life; and ſo ſhould Rationality be uppermoſt; the Rational ſhould be the Predominant; and the Life of Senſe ſhould be the Lowermoſt.

3. *Temptations* and Suggeſtions to eaſe Pleaſure and Profit, call Men off. We are in a place of Danger, expoſed to Temptations: We have the Allurements of Senſe inviting to Worldly Eaſe and Pleaſure: And theſe Snares catch Fools. We are all too much ſuch Fools; We are given up to gaze and admire the things without us, though it be contrary to the Rule of Wiſdom to admire any thing without. If Men knew the preciouſneſs of their Souls, they would admire nothing without them. It is an Argument of Emptineſs to gaze and to admire any thing without.

4. The *Preſence* and *Reality* of the things of *this Life*; and the *Futurity* only of the things of the *Other Life*. The Preſence, and reality of the things of this Life; they are at Hand; but for the things of the other Life, we have only Arguments to the Reaſon of the Mind. Things of Senſe that are preſent; theſe are Taking: but the Promiſes of Eternity are of things Future; and that is the Reaſon we are ſo tranſported by the one, and ſo Neglective of the other.

5. It is *Natural* to us to live the Life of Senſe: But 'tis given to Man *from above*, to live the *Life of Faith*. A Man may live the Life of Senſe, if he have no more of Education than a Beaſt: but to live by Faith, it is given to us *from above*.

6. We have Hurt and *Marred our Principles*. Nothing is more Natural to Man, than to live according to the Dictates of Reaſon. But we have Marred our Principles, and there is no confidence in Princi-

Principles that are Marred. Tools that are ſpoiled, what are they fit for? You cannot ſhave with a dull Raſor; neither can you write with a Pen that is ſpoiled. And the more excellent the Principles are; if they be Unnaturally Uſed, the more thoroughly they are ſpoiled: a Razor's edge is ſooner turned, than the dull edge of an Axe. If a Man Abuſe his Mind by any baſe act, the Ingenuity of his Soul is loſt for ever. There is nothing leſs than the Grace of God that can Recover the Ingenuity of a Spirit that is made Baſe, by any Baſeneſs or Treachery either to God or Man. Thus it comes to paſs that we are ſo untoward and ſo backward to cloſe with God applying himſelf to us for Reconciliation. We have Marred our Principles, we have loſt the purity and integrity of our Minds, by our voluntary conſent to Iniquity; ſo that if we would come into a good State, we muſt return to the Rule again, Acknowledge God, and he will direct our Paths.

So I have (doing Man no Wrong, and doing God equal Right) declared how the Matter ſtands between God and us; who is in the fault, that we are not reconciled: Who is to be blamed. Now give me leave to *Apply*.

1. If I have made you a juſt report of *God* concerning his forwardneſs; if this be a true Report of God; then *Dread not Fate and Deſtiny*, Principles that govern ſo far as Profaneneſs goes, that deſtroys all Truth. This is ſo deſperate, that all Principles fall before it. Therefore I adviſe you not to fear Cauſeleſly as a Slave: Fear not every Bodies Fear: Not the fear of the *Superſtitious*, for that is infinite: Neither fear the fear of the *Prophane*, for that is confuſed. He that Worſhips God in Truth, hath cheerfulneſs in his Mind, and clearneſs in his Underſtanding: the true Worſhip is Rational: But the Profane have confuſion in them, and the Superſtitious

ſtitious look upon God as an Enemy to their Nature, and Worſhip in Dread and Horror; but the true Worſhippers, worſhip him in cheerfulneſs and cheerneſs. I would ſooner believe there were no God at all, than that any Man in the World, is through any act of God, a Sinner or Miſerable. No Fate, no Deſtiny: But there is a Providence on God's Part, and Reaſon on our Part, through the Influence of God; and Fate and Deſtiny are no realities, but the Deities of the Superſtitious and Profane.

2*dly*. Let us *Blame our ſelves*, and *impute no Evil to God*. Whatever is amiſs, let God be acknowledged as a Principle of all Good: But in reſpect of Evil, he hath no hand in it at all; I mean as to the Production of it. He hath no hand Antecedently to Evil in order to the Production of it. Acknowledge God as Original to all good; but do not give him any Place Antecedently to Evil. He doth Permit it; and ſometimes turns it to Good: But he is not the Author of it.

3. Be *Encouraged to Good*; ſince God is the Promoter of it; be up and doing. If you ſay you are Impotent; I tell you *God is with you*; God is working in you.

4. *Apply your ſelf to God to help you through*. He Invites you. God's Call ſhould not be neglected: Go to him that calls you: Fetch ſtrength from Him that Offers to Enable you. God calls thee; do thou Anſwer him.

5. Let *God be juſtified*, and let the Blood of them that *Periſh* lye at their own Doors: Have God excuſed; and Man condemned. A Man cannot do any thing more Unworthy in reſpect of God; or more Cruel in reſpect of his own Soul; than to charge God with either his Sin, or Miſery.

6. If God do all this, if he do invite, exhort, give Encouragement, *why do not we cloſe with the Terms*

Terms? Why do we thus Neglect ſo great Salvation? What is more Natural, than for the Creature to Hearken to the Creator? But we are otherwiſe diſpoſed towards God.

7. *Who are we* that do theſe things, that ſtand upon theſe points? Who in reſpect of our *Relation* to God are his Creatures; in which reſpect we are bound to do him all Homage. Who in reſpect of our *Neceſſity*, are Rebels and Traitors. In reſpect of our *Danger*, we are under the Sentence of Condemnation. We neglect God, whom we ought to Reverence, Fear, Love, and Obey: And God ſpeaking Words of Grace, Words of Conſolation, Words of Encouragement: Oh, conſider theſe things together! How could I Aggravate this Stupidity and Blockiſhneſs, and Unworthy return unto God by Perſons under ſuch Neceſſity, and Obligations, and in a Matter that Relates nearer to them, than all the Affairs of the World beſides; and yet they ſo Backward. This is the Repreſentation of the Caſe as it ſtands on God's Part, and ours: We find our ſelves exceeding Faulty; and it becomes us to implore his Mercy, Aid, and Aſſiſtance in this Probation-ſtate to Recover our ſelves to the State of Reaſon, and to turn to him, that ſo it may be well with our Souls to all Eternity.

Thus have I explained to you the State of Reconciliation: How *God* ſtands affected towards us in this point, hath been made known; the Reality of it hath been aſſerted; with God's ſeriouſneſs, forwardneſs and activity in it: As alſo our Backwardneſs and Untowardneſs, and ſo our great Unworthineſs, which is matter of Aſtoniſhment and great Wonder, that where we are ſo much concerned, being the Perſons Benefited, being Perſons ſo Neceſſitated, we ſhould be ſo backward. Whereas God, who is neither Hurt by our Wickedneſs, nor Advantaged by our Righteouſneſs, is up and doing,

Vol. III. Let us at length conſider how much we are concerned; how utterly undone, if not Reconciled; how unfit it is we ſhould ſtand upon good Terms with our Creator: and ſo Reaſon our ſelves into better diſpoſition, and Provoke our own dulneſs at laſt to quit our ſelves like Men. I cloſe with the Invitation of God; do our ſelves Right; act that which is worthy of our ſelves, and which may hold a Proportion with God's diſpoſition towards us.

In theſe things I have been long: I have only this to *Add*; To ſhew you *wherein* this Reconciliation doth conſiſt, and *whereby* you may come to be reconciled to God: And I will give you *ſix* heads.

1. Rectifie your wrong *Apprehenſion* of God. To lay aſide falſe Opinion, this is the firſt: But it will not be the laſt. We find in our ſelves, that if we have had wrong Apprehenſion of a Perſon, if we have a better Repreſentation of him, we begin to change in our Minds. Wrong Apprehenſions of God are very Miſchievous; they keep us off from him, at the greateſt diſtance. The firſt ſtep to Reconciliation, is to lay aſide wrong Apprehenſion. In this let me entreat you to abide in the Truth. There are ſome Apprehenſions of God that are very Unworthy of Him: and very Miſchievous to thoſe that have them. Let us think of *God*, that he *is as good as good can* be, and will expreſs himſelf in all favourly Affection. Do not think that God hath done any thing concerning thee before thou came into being, whereby thou art determinated either to Sin or to Miſery. This will make thee Unwilling to entertain any thoughts of Peace with God; and is in it ſelf a very Lye: Such Thoughts God will convince, when he comes to Judgment; and will ſhew, that they who Entertain ſuch Thoughts, live in a Lye. Believe him, that *He wills not the death of a Sinner*: Believe him,

Ezeck. 18. 32.

that

that *He would, that all Men ſhould be ſaved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*: Believe him, that the Repentance of a Sinner is acceptable to him. He makes no gain of his Creatures loſs. Thou canſt not exceed in fair Interpretations of his Words and Promiſes. It is a rule that Divines go upon, that it is a Preſumption, a bold Act, an Uſurpation upon God, for any one to Limit or Confine, where the Scripture doth not. God is moſt ſeriouſly willing that his Creatures ſhould avoid Miſery, and come to Happineſs; and that none of them ſhould finally Periſh. To this purpoſe is the great Negotiation of his Spirit; the publication of the Goſpel, and the Manifeſtation of himſelf in his Son; Divinity inhabiting Humane Nature; the Death and Paſſion of his Son. And for this purpoſe doth God make uſe of his Power over himſelf; and over his Patience; that Sinners may at laſt, before they depart hence, be Reconciled to God. Lay aſide therefore all Unworthy thoughts of God: Gloſs upon the Promiſes; You cannot Amplifie them too far, provided you do not go beyond the Capacity of receiving benefit by them. We have aſſurance, that *the King of Kings is Merciful.* Let us therefore, having incurred the Forfeiture of our lives, yet upon this Apprehenſion of the Clemency and benignity of Heaven; let us come in, Deprecate, leave off to Sin, and caſt our ſelves upon the Grace and Goodneſs of God declared in and through Chriſt, to all thoſe that Repent, and believe the Goſpel. This is the firſt thing; this leads the way; this changeth the courſe; this begins the happy Motion, which ends in Reconciliation with God. Diſc. VIII. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

2. Let your *Affections* be inflamed toward God. For this is due order; let Underſtanding go before and Affections follow after. The Order of the Creation is, that I find out the way by my Underſtanding, and promote and carry it on by my Affections.

fections. If we Apprehend God to be Good and Lovely, we cannot but Adore, Love, and Magnifie Him: The ſecond will follow upon the firſt. If there be an Impediment upon the Firſt, you will never come at the Laſt. Indeed there is the caſe of *Melancholy*; and in this Caſe the Mind will peeviſhly reflect upon God, and will ſuſpect him, that he makes a ſhew, or Over-words himſelf. But as it proceeds from Melancholy Temper, or the Enemy; it is rather a Burthen, than a Sin: But Oppoſe it; ſet your ſelf up againſt it. This you muſt do; or elſe Affections will be extinguiſhed, and will dye: For if once it is thought that God is not Gracious and Faithful, you will give over to Love Him: No Man Affects him, that is falſe in Friendſhip.

3. Be Reconciled to God, by *Savouring the* things of God. Through Reconciliation we come to Harmonize with the Nature, and Mind, and Will of God: To think of things as he thinks; to Savour and Reliſh them as he doth. Friends that are of a Familiar Acquaintance, they come ſo to Harmonize that you may know one by the other: Know what one thinks by the other. It is as if one Soul did Animate two Bodies. So through this happy work of Reconciliation, we come to Savour and Reliſh the things of God; come to judge of things as God judgeth; come to Adhere to the Rule of Righteouſneſs as God doth, whoſe Underſtanding is in an inſeperable conjunction with Truth: And his Will is in an inſeperable conjunction with his Underſtanding. And when we are made whole, we ſhall in State Reſemble God: Our Minds and Underſtandings they will abide in the Truth; and then our Wills will be well directed and governed by the Underſtanding. For the Will hath no other guide then the Underſtanding; being of her ſelf Blind; the Underſtanding is her Eye. But if the Underſtanding

ing be wavering, it is hap-hazzard what a Man's Will ſhall carry him to. But if we are Reconciled to God, we ſhall be, in our Meaſure, in our Underſtanding and Will, ſuitable to God, judging as he judgeth. Diſc. VIII.

4. Be Reconciled to God by *Imitating* Him in Acts of Goodneſs; Acts of Mercy, Acts of Love. Be forward to do good: be Tender-hearted, Compaſſionate.

5. Let us *Direct all our Intentions* towards Him. There is all the Reaſon in the World, that we ſhould end in God, becauſe we begin in God. If God be *Alpha*, He is alſo to be *Omega* to us. He made us for himſelf: We are not for our ſelves, becauſe we are not our own, but God's. There is none greater; there is no other to whom we owe our ſelves; therefore, we muſt Refer all to God's Honour and Glory.

6. Acknowledge his *Grace and Goodneſs in Chriſt*. This is purely Evangelical: This is a Supperaddition to thoſe things that are founded in the State of God's Creation. This is the direction that we receive from God, in this State of Apoſtacy. And ſo to Acknowledge the Grace and Goodneſs of God by *Jeſus Chriſt*, this is neceſſary as an Antidote in caſe of Poyſon; as a Cordial in caſe of Fainting. We have made our ſelves guilty, we are faulty, we have brought upon the Creation of God, that that is Unnatural; an evil Diſeaſe, which hath Marred our Principles; Therefore it is Neceſſary for us to Acknowledge the Sovereign ſupply of Grace; and this is the Manifeſtation of the Grace of God for Recovery in and through *Jeſus Chriſt*. Theſe are the *ſix* things whereby Reconciliation is begun, carried on, and finiſhed.

Now to *Apply* this, and ſo to *conclude*.

1. This doth highly *Recommend Religion* to us; in that it is a Reconciling Principle. The Spirit of Religion

Vol. III. Religion in the latitude of it, is a Reconciling Spirit. There are but two things Final to Chriſtianity; all Chriſtianity finally ends in two things: And to the End no Medium muſt be inconſiſtent. A Mean is only in order to the End. All things in Religion are but a Mean in reſpect to two things which have the place of Ends: that is,

First, The *Reconciliation* of *Man to God*: And the

Second, Is the Reconciling of *Man* to *Man*: Yea the Reconciliation of the whole Creation of God. Whoſoever therefore doth begin, or maintain a difference upon Religion or Conſcience, he pretends a Mean contrary to the End. Do nothing in Religion to diſſerve either of theſe two Ends, *your Agreement with God*, *your Agreement with Man*. This is all Religion; the Religion of God's Creation, the Religion of the Goſpel, that which is Advanced and promoted by Goſpel-Recovery; it hath but theſe two Ends in it, the Reconciliation of Man to God, and the Reconciliation of Man to Man. Two cannot fall out one with another in matters of Religion, becauſe it is final in Religion for Men to Agree. It is that which God ſent his Son into the World for. Yea, let me tell you, he that is not Reconciled to God, and to his Fellow Creatures, ſhall finally Periſh in Hell. This is the firſt Obſervation: You have here a juſt Report of the Nature and Quality of Religion.

2. You have alſo a juſt Report of the *Work and Buſineſs of Religion*. It is a Rectifying of our Tempers, a Transformation of our Spirits, a Regulation of our Souls. By Religion we return to God; and the Obligation that is upon us unto God, renewed and Reinforced. And ſo we, by Communion with God, to a Participation of God, and to an Aſſimulation to Him: And ſo God being Superior and Chief; and we Inferior and Dependant; we are made

made like him; juſt as the Sun, who is predominant, doth Aſſimulate every thing to it ſelf. All here below were as a Dungeon before, now it is all Light and all Anſwer the Motion of the Sun. That which is the Principle of Regulation, doth Regulate all, and Transform all to its own Image. God, in this Buſineſs of Religion, is Principal; the Original of Life and Motion: And we are admitted into a Participation, we are Transformed by him, and all our Motions are Regulated by him. Diſc. VIII.

Laſtly, You have here the *Wretched State of Sin.* The Circumſtances of the State are Apoſtacy from God, Diſtaſte and Offence at him, Enmity with him, Contradiction to him: All things are turned upſide down. The Mind of Man is malign and ſpiteful againſt God and Goodneſs; Sickly and untoward, and we quarrel at our Phyſician. A State Unanſwerable, and off from God. Whereas it is moſt Natural to us, to be with God; for he is the Center of our Souls, and our Ultimate End: In the State of Sin; inſtead of Love and Good-will, Anger and Diſpleaſure; inſtead of Faith and Confidence, Jealouſie and Heart-burning, and all kind of Malignity in the Mind of Men. But now Religion taking effect, and proving available, all this Malignity is ſubdued; and we are brought into a Harmonical frame. We are brought back to our Original ſtate and condition between God and us.

Thus much ſhall ſerve for that point. *Be ye Reconciled to God.*

Something I have to ſay concerning the *Laſt Verſe* of the Chapter.

DIS-

DISCOURSE IX.

The Arguments by which Men ſhould be perſuaded to Reconcile unto God.

2 COR. 5. 21.

For he hath made him Sin for us, who knew no Sin; that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.

Diſc. IX.

I Shall ſay but very little to theſe Words: But they having ſo much Relation to what I have ſaid before, I muſt not overlook them.

He made him Sin for us, &c. I ſhall firſt give you an account of the *Connexion* of theſe *Words* and the former: And, *Secondly*, give an *Explanation* of the *Matter* contained in the Words; which is choice and weighty. It contains the Grace, the Goodneſs of God; the Effect of his Indulgence and Compaſſion; the Proviſion that he hath made for the deſperate Caſe of Sinners. Matter of great Importance, of near Concernment.

For the *Connexion*. This inforceth the great Invitation of Grace, to be Reconciled to God, becauſe God hath done ſo much towards it: *He hath made him Sin for us, that knew no Sin; that we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* And was ever Argument better enforced? if we conſider the Caſe: either,

1. The *Reaſon* of the Inference.
2. The *Neceſſity* of our *Condition*: Or,
3. The ample *Proviſion* of God: Or,
4. God's

4. God's compaſſionate *Affections*.
5. God's gracious *Condeſcenſion*.
6. God's free *Conceſſion*: Or the
7. Tranſcendent *Supply*: All which are in theſe Words conſidered in their Reference and Relation to the former Words. Nothing is there more inexcuſable than keeping off from God, ſo kindly inviting us, when this Offer of Grace is ſo well grounded, in ſuch a Proviſion as God hath made. *He hath made him Sin for us, who knew no Sin*, &c. God hath not better provided for any Effect in the World; no, not for the great Effect upon which the Being and Welfare of the whole Creation depends, than he hath provided for a Sinner's Faith and Hope in him; for his Aſſurance and Satisfaction in believing. Wherefore it follows in all Reaſon, that which we find in St. *John*, that it ſhould be declared, that *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkneſs rather than Light.* Joh. 3. 19. And ſo much for the Account of the *Reference* and Relation that theſe Words have to the foregoing Words. *Be ye reconciled to God*; for God is in good earneſt: He hath done more upon this account than he doth in keeping up the whole Courſe of Nature. For, *He hath made his own Son a Sacrifice.* He *hath made him that knew no Sin, to be Sin for us; that we might be the Righteouſneſs of God in him. He hath made him Sin.*] Which is more than if he had ſaid, a *Sinner*. That *we might be made Righteouſneſs.*] Which is more than if he had ſaid, *Righteous.*

Two things now lie before me to do.

1*ſt*. To lead you into a right *Apprehenſion* of the *words*.

2. To ſecure your Minds from ſome *Miſtakes* in the Matter of theſe Words. Concerning the Points of Life or Death, Miſapprehenſions may be miſchievous: And truly there are Miſtakes on both Parts.

Theſe Words require a right Interpretation, *how*

Chriſt

Chriſt is made Sin :] How *We Righteouſneſs.*] For, believe it, there are wrong Apprehenſions, which reflect ill upon God, and are miſchievous to thoſe that have them.

1. Therefore I muſt tell you for the Word [*Sin*] Chriſt *was made Sin.*] This Form of Words is a *Hebraiſm* : For the New Teſtament doth often uſe the Language of the *Hebrews*, which is very ſhort for Words, more than any other Language in the World. One Word ſignifies *Sin*, and the *Sacrifice* for Sin ; and the *Expiation* of that Sacrifice : as thoſe who are learned in that Language know. So that here a Man might miſtake, if he ſhould think Chriſt was made a *Sinner.* That would attribute Injuſtice to God the Father, Diſhonour to Chriſt, and Loſs to us. But *He made him Sin for us* ; and that is, a *Sacrifice for Sin.* And for this I refer you to the Prophet : *He made his Soul an Offering for Sin.* Now,
Iſa. 53. 10. that I may prevent this Miſapprehenſion on our part in this that may ſo unworthily reflect upon God, and diſparage and diſcredit our Lord and Saviour, I ſhall explain to you in what Chriſt *is made Sin*, both *Negatively*, and *Poſitively.*

1*ſt. Negatively.* Three things therefore I muſt peremptorily deny.

1. That Chriſt was ever *Faulty*, ever guilty in the leaſt : Not in any one Inſtance ; either the leaſt Miſgovernment of his Spirit, or in the Government of his Life. There was never any Evil received or admitted into him, by his Conſent ; which is the known way by which one becomes a Sinner : By that way Men betray their Innocence, and become Sinners. But our Saviour never ſtained himſelf by admitting Evil into himſelf, his own Conſent. The *thought of Evil* ; the Knowledge of *Evil, is not Evil.* I have met with ſome Tender-ſpirited Perſons, that have had the Thoughts of

of Evil, and thought it was Evil. Good Souls! It is good to be tender. But *it is not Evil, to think of Evil.* God himſelf thinks of Evil; and ſees Evil; how elſe ſhould he puniſh Evil. It is not what you know, or think of; but what you make choice of, and delight in. Our Saviour never admitted any Evil into him: For if he had failed, he could not have made Satisfaction. For it is not the *Paſſion* of Chriſt that gives us any Comfort and Satisfaction; but that Chriſt's Paſſion is a Propitiation. This is the Cauſe of Juſtification and Satisfaction, that this Paſſion is our *Propitiation*; That which God will have in order to our *Reconciliation.* So that it was the Proviſion of Grace; the Fruit of Chriſt's Good-will to us; ſo it is the Ground and Foundation of our Reconciliation. And thus conſidered, the Paſſion of Chriſt is our Conſolation (otherwiſe it were our Reproof.) And this could not have been, if there had not been abſolute Innocence: and that could not have been, if our Saviour had admitted Sin into him by conſent or choice. This muſt be, elſe you make God unjuſt; diſhonour Chriſt, and invalidate his Death. That is the *Firſt*: Chriſt was never Faulty, never Guilty in the leaſt. Diſc. IX.

2. I deny that Chriſt was ever under *God's Diſlike* or Diſpleaſure. This follows upon the former, and is as neceſſary to be underſtood. As Chriſt was never a Sinner, ſo his Perſon was never unacceptable unto God. God never had any Regret at him; never any the leaſt Offence at him: He was never under God's Diſlike or Diſpleaſure. In the loweſt State, his Perſon was in Favour and Acceptance with God. This is teſtified by thoſe Extraordinaries, no leſs than Miracles, at his Death: And that great Miracle, the Reſurrection of Chriſt. When he died, the Sun eclipſed, the Vail of the Temple rent, Dead Bodies aroſe; enough to convince the

hard-hearted *Jews*; which made barbarous Soldiers acknowledge him the Son of God. And this is Teſtimony to all the World, that he was a Perſon in Grace and Favour with God; and that God had no Diſlike or Diſpleaſure in him. And then,

3. And this is conſequent upon both the former: I deny that Chriſt ever *felt the Worm of Conſcience.* Chriſt was never in the Helliſh State, as we expreſs it: He never endured in the leaſt the Pain of the Damned: He never ſuffered the Worm of Conſcience: For he could not have a Reflexion upon That which was not. And he was never guilty; he never ſuffered the *Helliſh State*; which doth mainly import two things (I ſpeak not now of the Whole of it, but the *Main and Principal* of it) that is, the Senſe of Guilt, and a Senſe of God's final Refuſal. For if I have a Senſe of Guilt, and have Hope of Pardon, this is ſome Comfort: But if I have a Senſe of Guilt, and that the time is paſt for Recovery, this compleats the Helliſh State; and the Soul riſeth up againſt God, and is in Rancour and Malignity towards God. Now *Chriſt* was never in this State in the leaſt: He never had the Pain of the Damned. Our Saviour was firſt and laſt, Holy and Harmleſs. Whenever you hear of *Chriſt being made Sin*, diſcharge Chriſt in your Thoughts from theſe three; from being at any time *Faulty* or *Guilty*; from being ever under *God's Diſpleaſure*; from being ever in the *Helliſh State.* This for the *Negative* Part.

2. Now for the *Poſitive* Part: What was done, when Chriſt was *made Sin:* He was made a *Sacrifice for Sin.* You will ask me, What is it to be a *Sacrifice for Sin?* I anſwer.

It is to be deſtroyed, burnt with Fire. A *Sacrifice* is put into a State of Suffering; put into an evil Condition; it feels ill Uſage, that it ſelf doth not

not deſerve; but upon another's Account. And Chriſt ſuffered evil; he ſuffered harm, he ſuffered affliction; none like him; a weight of Sorrow, a Burden that made him ſweat drops of Blood; no Man's Afflictions were like his: And ſurely no Man more ſenſible; for thoſe that are of the choiceſt Natures are moſt ſenſible of Pain and Suffering: So that it muſt needs be that our Saviour was more ſenſible than any of us could poſſibly be. And he ſuffers this Harm and Evil upon the Account of Sin, *for us, and in our ſtead.* So that there is ſuffering harm, and ſuffering it upon occaſion of Sin, which doth augment ſuffering; for barely to ſuffer, is no Diſparagement; and to ſuffer as a Martyr, is an Honour: But Chriſt ſuffered deeply, and that upon the occaſion of Sin. So that here was Diſrepute in the Suffering, and that upon the Account of others. In reſpect of *God*, in perfect obedience; and in reſpect of *us*, in compaſſion and tenderneſs. Diſc. IX.

Now that Chriſt might thus ſuffer without any Reflexion upon God, and for our own Advantage, I give you an account in *four* Particulars.

1. Becauſe he did it of his *own Will* and Voluntary Conſent: Therefore no fault can be found with God. It was that that was admitted by our Saviour's own conſent. Now we ſay no Man is wronged but againſt his Will: There is no wrong done, where the Party ſuffering harm doth willingly ſuffer. And then,

2. He might *ſuffer, and for our Advantage: Suffer*, becauſe he was cloathed with our Nature, and had a ſenſe of our Infirmities: He was in ſome conjunction with us.

3. He did it in *Complyance* with his *Father's Will*, and in high *Compaſſion of us*. For though God impoſed it not (for undoubtedly Chriſt might have refuſed it) yet it was God's Pleaſure: Therefore it is ſaid, *This Commandment have I received, to lay down my* Joh. 10. 18.

my Life. This we ſhall do well to conſider, that the glorious Majeſty whom we have offended, doth take Pleaſure to find out a way that we might be abſolved.

4. *Laſtly*, He did it, *not raſhly or vainly*, but upon the moſt weighty Reaſons, and moſt important Cauſes. Never was Action done upon better conſideration, or more worthy ends. Some tending

1. To *God's Honour*: Others tending

2. To the Eſtabliſhment of the *Rule of Righteouſneſs.*

3. Others to the Renewal and Recovery of *Humane Nature.*

4. Others tending to the *Quieting* of our *Minds*: And,

5. Some *Fundamental* to many neceſſary points of Doctrine. So we cannot ſay of Chriſt, as *David* moved the queſtion of *Abner*, *Dyed Abner as a Fool dyeth?* Our Saviour did not ſo dye; but upon moſt weighty and important Reaſons: Such as I have expreſſed: I will inſiſt in particular.

1. Some referring to *God's Honour*: the wiping off matter of Aſperſion and Reflexion upon God, and Defamation; upon which, Chriſt's ſuffering upon our Account, ſpeaks *three* Things.

Firſt, That God is *no Countenancer of Iniquity.*

Secondly, That he is no Slack and *Neglective Governour.*

Thirdly, That he is no *Reſpecter of Perſons.*

God would not make uſe of His Abſolute Right, which no body can controul; for he renders a reaſon to every one of any of thoſe Matters; of the Uſe of his Liberty; and the Uſe of his own Right. He hath Power to Abate of his own Right (his Right of inflicting of Puniſhment, of reducing Rebellious Creatures to their Duty by Puniſhment, if they will not be brought over by fair Means.) He hath the Right of Obedience; and then the Right of Puniſhment

Puniſhment, if the Creature will not Obey. Now, God by his own Right, might have Pardoned Sin as an Act of his Power or Might: But it was not Thought to be the beſt way: And that which God doth not think beſt, we are not to think of at all. Therefore we are not to think of God's Pardoning Sin out of Chriſt. Diſc. IX.

For *Firſt*, If God had Pardoned Sin, and no Amends made, *God* would have been thought to be a *Countenancer of Iniquity*: Or *Man* would have thought that the Creatures Exorbitances were no great Matter. So God in his Wiſdom thought Fit that there ſhould be an Eminent inſtance of God's Diſpleaſure at the Creatures Apoſtacy by Sin, and to ſhew what Offence he takes at it.

Secondly, God might have been thought to have been a *Neglective Governour*, if God had Neglected this bold Act of Man; his plotting to be God's equal, to be like God: If he had paſſed this without Puniſhment, He would have been thought a Neglective Governour.

Thirdly, If God had not choſen ſuch an Inſtance; A Perſon above all Perſons acceptable to him; He would have been thought to have been *Partial*: But now he ſhews himſelf to be *no Reſpecter of Perſons*: For you ſee how much Evil befalls a Perſon in Conjunction with Sinners; making himſelf their Proxy. Theſe three things are done on the behalf of *God*, for the wiping away matter of Aſperſion from God, and Defamation. It Apparently declares God is *no Countenancer of Iniquity*; nor a ſlack and *Neglective Governour*: And *no Reſpecter of Perſons*, in reſpect of Right. No one Perſon is conſidered: He Regards not the Rich, or the Poor. And this is he firſt Account. But

2dly, Some ends of Chriſt's Death tend to the Eſtabliſhment of the *Rule of Righteouſneſs*. For Chriſt

Vol. III. ſuffering upon this account, the violation of Right; imports three things.

Firſt, *Right is not to Veil to Sin.* Men may pleaſe themſelves in Fancies, but theſe are Important things. Right is not to Veil to Sin.

Secondly, The *Creature is under a Law.*

Thirdly, Better a *Sinner ſuffer, than Right be avoided.* This is an Account of Chriſts ſuffering; and a True end to Eſtabliſh the Rule of Righteouſneſs. This was called in Queſtion: And if a Governour ſuffer common Practice againſt a Law, without Controulment or Puniſhment, it is an avoiding the Law, and making it Null. Now it ſhews that God will not Void the Rule of Righteouſneſs; in that he hath required *Satisfaction*, and hath thereby declared that Right is not to Veil to Sin: And that the Creature is under a Law: And that it is better a Sinner ſuffer than right be voided.

3*dly*. Other Ends of Chriſt's Death tend to the *Renewal and Rectification of Humane Nature.* For you muſt know, Intellectual Nature is not Reformed by infuſing ſomething into it; but by way of Illumination, and better Information; by way of Argument: That is the way to gain upon a Man's Mind; Teach him Knowledge, and that is proper to beget Goodneſs. Humane Nature is Reformed and Refined in a way of Inſtruction, Doctrine and Diſcipline. A Man is ſaid to be *Pure in heart*, as Water is ſaid to be pure; which tho' it be ſullied, yet give it but time it will cleanſe it ſelf: So a Man is *Pure in Heart*, when he hath a Principle in his Mind that will work him to Repentance, and to an Act of Faith. And the Death of Chriſt is ſuch a tranſcendent Notion to this purpoſe, ſuch a Motive to Repentance, that the Principle of Light in the Sun ſhall not be more effectual to the caſting out warm Rays, than this Knowledge of the Intention of Chriſt's Death ſhall be a Powerful and effectual Argument in the Mind

Mind of Man for his own Rectification and Recovery. For if I ſeriouſly conſider *Chriſt is a Sacrifice for Sin*; to take away Sin by his Blood: ſhould I not then put away Evil from me, and return to my Duty? Thus you ſee it tends to the Renewal and *Rectification* of Humane Nature. Diſc: IX.

4*thly*. Other Ends tend to the *Quieting of our Minds*, and neceſſary ſatisfaction. For I know what ever Men imagine that have not Faith; yet if a Man have a tender Conſcience, it will be full of Cares and Doubts: For it is contrary to the Reaſon of the World, that a Superior ſhould come and entreat an Inferior to be Reconciled. If we conſider the Experience of the whole World, we ſhall find that we are ſo much given to Revenge, and delight ſo much in it, that we ſhall hardly be brought to believe that God will out-right Pardon Sin, without any thing done. But now if I know that a Perſon of high Acceptance with God, hath made ſuch a Sacrifice as the like never was, nor can be again, and hath thereby given Teſtimony of God's Right: He hath ſuffered as a Malefactor, who was Innocent: Here is Ground of Belief; and a Reaſon: For God hath not done ſuch a thing in vain, and Chriſt hath not laid down his Life like a Fool. I dare ſay, the Death of Chriſt, according to the Will of God, upon occaſion of Sin, is as requiſite and neceſſary in reſpect of our Apprehenſions, and the ſatisfaction of our Minds, as it is any way in reſpect of God. Our Faith is very much Facilitated, when we hear God himſelf, who is the Party Wronged, proclaim that he hath received Satisfaction.

5*thly*. and *Laſtly*, Some Ends of Chriſt's Death are *Fundamental* to many neceſſary Points of Doctrine. I will name you what they be, becauſe it is requiſite for us to know them.

Firſt, There is no certainty of *Right or Truth from what a Multitude* doth: For a Croud put

our Saviour to Death. And here I will challenge the World, and confute That which ſome Men depend upon; *All ſay*; *All do*. That that is in it ſelf Unworthy, may be carried on, and in ſometime or other, receive a general Applauſe: And ſometimes Men have been tempted to Atheiſm upon this. But ſince God hath ſuffered his own Son to be ſo uſed; and had a Good Intent in it; do not fall to queſtion the Wiſe Government of God, upon any ſuch Inference: It is neceſſary for us to have ſuch a Principle in us, for the ſtay of our Minds; that ſo we may not break out in any Unworthy Thoughts of God, in the way of his Government.

Secondly, It carries this along with it, That it is *not beſt for a Man to be over-long in this State*. We think of building Tabernacles here, and being long here: But our Saviour, that knew beſt what was to come after, He made haſt out of the World: For he gave up his Life in the Perfection of his Age: and when Life is of moſt uſe; then did our Saviour choſe to leave the World. Therefore we are not to think that it is beſt for us to be here.

Thirdly, There may be here in the World *Suffering of Evil*, and hard Meaſure; which may rather be *Martyrdom*, than juſt Puniſhment: Not the Suffering, but the Cauſe, diſtinguiſhes the Martyr from the Malefactor.

Fourthly, That there is ſuch an abominable *Filthineſs in Sin*, that the higheſt Wiſdom thought it requiſite, that there ſhould be the moſt conſiderable Means imaginable to the taking it away; the higheſt *Expiation* for it; for the controuling Iniquity, for diſcountenancing Impiety; before he ſuffers Benignity and Compaſſion to ſhew it ſelf. This ſhews Sin to be an ugly abominable thing; highly diſpleaſing to God.

Fifthly, *God is willing to be at the largeſt Expence*, to do what is poſſible to reconcile his Enemies, to recover

recover Sinners. God is wanting in no Expreſſion of Grace; in no way of Clemency: He fails in no Coſt to recover his loſt Creature. When we read of Chriſt's Death, conſider to what Purpoſe it was: How hard it muſt be for God to deliver up a Perſon in ſuch Grace and Favour with himſelf. We cannot but think of God's infinite Compaſſion towards us; that rather than we ſhould periſh, he ſhould do ſuch a thing. The whole Creation coſt not God ſo much; for that coſt him but the Word of his Mouth; but he here parts with his Son; expoſeth him to the Rage of Devils and degenerate Men; and permits them to do their worſt; go as far as they could. And this God would never have done, but for the Recovery and Redemption of the Souls of ruined and loſt Men. Diſc. IX.

II. You have now an account of theſe Words; that *God made him Sin for us*, &c. Now for the End of this, that *we might be made the Righteouſneſs of God through him.* And we are made ſo. *But of him are ye in Chriſt Jeſus, who of God is made to us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs, Sanctification, and Redemption. And we are accepted in the Beloved*: And this is performed in two things; our *Juſtification*, and *Sanctification.* 1 Cor. 1. 30.

1. In our *Juſtification.* We are reputed for Righteous; that is, we are *Abſolved.* There is two things in Juſtification: We are Diſcharged from the Guilt of Sin, and Put out of Danger in reſpect of Puniſhment. Now in Juſtification we are freed from Guilt; and freed from Puniſhment.

2. Then for *Sanctification.* We are made clean by the Renovation of the Divine Spirit. God upon the ſight of Chriſt's Obedience, his Righteouſneſs, his Paſſion, doth forgive Sin to all that repent and believe. Thus *He*, who was perfectly Innocent, free from all Guilt, was dealt withal, as if he had been Faulty; *Ex intuitu paſſionis Chriſti pœnitentibus & Credentibus remittuntur peccata.*

Vol. III. Faulty; that *We*, who are really Faulty, might be dealt withal as Innocent. Chriſt ſtood *in our ſtead*; and we were looked upon as in him: And it is well for us, that we are conſidered in relation to him: But it was ill for him, that he was looked upon in relation to us: For in relation to us he died: But we, in conjunction with him, live, and are accepted of, otherwiſe than we of our ſelves deſerve. So there is a double Benefit. (1.) A Tranſlation of Righteouſneſs from Him to us. (2.) A Collation of Holineſs upon us. The one through God's gracious Acceptation; the other through Spiritual Regeneration. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that juſtifieth the Ungodly, his Faith is accounted for Righteouſneſs.* You muſt not underſtand this Phraſe immediately, *while* Ungodly: But he that *was* Ungodly. But now there are other Conditions begun in him. For there are Preparatory Diſpoſitions in the Subject, before Juſtification. Now if a Man be Impenitent, it were not a true Act to juſtifie him; theſe cannot ſtand together, *Impenitent*, and *Juſtified*: No, he muſt be under the Preparation; there muſt be the firſt degree of Repentance: For it is Repugnant, that an Unbeliever, while ſuch, ſhould be juſtified. *Formerly* a Sinner; *Now* a Believer, and is pardoned; that is the true Explication. If any one ſhould ſay, that it matters not whether the Man be impenitent or not; but that God will pardon him upon the account of Chriſt: It is that which is unworthy of God: It is as if a foul Murtherer, contrary to Evidence, were declared Innocent. It is a dangerous Error which ſome have taught; that Men may have their Sins pardoned, without any thing done in them. Here I muſt put in a *Caution*; *that Chriſt is made by God to us Righteouſneſs*: This is ſo to be underſtood, as not to prejudice Inherent Righteouſneſs; as if any

Rom. 4. 5.

any could be Righteous without inherent Righteouſneſs. This cannot be. You put a Lye upon God, for him to eſteem any one Righteous that is Unrighteous. Every Sinner before the firſt degree of Faith and Repentance, he is indeed Unrighteous; And if God ſhould eſteem him Righteous; this Act of God's would be a wrong Act: *Imputation of Righteouſneſs:* It will prove but an Imagination in us; and ineffectual, if it be accompanied with Unrighteouſneſs, and Impenitency in the Subject. Apparel, though never ſo rich, will not cure an internal Malady, without an inward Application. Make what Imputation you will, or Application you can; if there be not a Renewal in the Spirit of the Mind, the Man cannot be juſtified. For God cannot eſteem him Righteous, that is really Unrighteous. There is neceſſary the firſt Act of Faith; and the firſt Degree of Repentance; ſo that the Perſon may be able to ſay; *I am not now in the Spirit, wherein I was when I did Sin: I am now truly changed.* We are ſo made the Righteouſneſs of God in and through Chriſt, as not to prejudice inherent Righteouſneſs: it muſt not be ſo underſtood. But then we muſt underſtand this ſo, as not to bring into the World an Indiſtinction between Chriſt's and Chriſtians Righteouſneſs. For though the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt be ours; it is not ſo ours as it is Chriſt's. Chriſt is juſtified by Works of Righteouſneſs; we are juſtified by pardon of Sin. Chriſt is juſtified by the Law of Works; we by the Law of Faith: And ſo God doing away That that is Faulty, by an Act of his Prerogative, pardons our Sin. We are recommended to God by Chriſt; we are accepted of God by Chriſt; we have the Benefit of Chriſt's Obedience and Paſſion; it is the better for us, the more our Saviour be a Perſon in Grace and Favour; He in Himſelf, and We for his ſake. Diſc. IX.

Chriſt

Vol. III. Chriſt is made our Righteouſneſs three ways. (1.) By *Impetration*; becauſe Chriſt procures us Grace and Favour from the Throne of Grace. (2.) By way of *Imputation*: For we are received as in him; aſſumed into Relation by him. (3.) In a way of *Communication*: For God communicates to us the Gift and Grace of the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe three ways *we are made the Righteouſneſs of God*; by way of *Impetration*, *Imputation*, and *Communication*. Therefore let us all take care to be *found in Chriſt*; that ſo our Sins charged upon him, in the Senſe before expreſſed, may not be charged upon us. Let us take care *to be found in him, not having our own Righteouſneſs*; that is, not having no Righteouſneſs of our own; but not having Preſumption in our ſelves: For Juſtification is the Fruit of God's Grace. He doth not mean, not having Diſpoſitions; for then had he contradicted himſelf in
Phil. 3. 9. the next Words. *Not having mine own Righteouſneſs, which is of the Law; but that which is through the Faith of Chriſt; the Righteouſneſs which is of God by Faith.*

And here now for the further Explication of our being *found in him*. We are found in him, as in our *Head*, as in our *Sacrifice*, as in our *Security*, as in our *Proxy*, as in our *Mediator*, as in our *Rock*, as in our *Huſband*, as in our *Governour*. The Whole ſhews of what Import and Conſequence Chriſt is to us; and how Unſafe Man's Condition is without Chriſt; and it lays before us, how compleat a way of Recovery God hath provided: God the Contriver of our Recovery; Chriſt the Means.

1. Wherefore, in the firſt place, Let us *know our ſelves*; and diſtinguiſh between the Fruit of our State; and the Fruit of God's Grace and Kindneſs.

2. Let us cheerfully *Partake of God's Grace.*

3. Let

3. Let us *Receive* from him *with Self-denyal and Thankfulneſs*: And ſince *God hath made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin*; Let us beg of God, that he would *make us the Righteouſneſs of God in him.* For this is that which God did finally Aim at, when he did deliver up his Son to that hard Uſage: He did then intend our Recovery, our Safety and Welfare. Diſc. IX.

DISCOURSE X.

The Eſſence of Religion, a Diſpoſition for God.

EPH. 2. 22.

In whom alſo ye are builded together for an Habitation of God through the Spirit.

IN this Lapſed State of Mankind we want two things; *Pardon*, becauſe we having contracted Iniquity, are become guilty: *Help* and *Stength*, becauſe by our Fall, we have contracted Weakneſs and Impotency. Diſc. X.

The Argument that I am upon, concerns the *Latter* of theſe two; which are the great Goſpel-Priviledges, Benefits, and Advantages: and which in my Text is expreſſed by way of *Metaphor*. Now a Metaphor repreſents a thing leſs known, by what is better known. You may acquaint a Man with a thing of which he hath no Knowledge, or ever heard of, by telling him what it is in this way, by repreſenting it to him by ſomething he doth know and underſtand.

So

Vol. III.

So the Poet ſaith, *the Fields Laugh*, and we know how we are affected when we *Laugh*; then all is well with us; then we are pleaſed. So when the Corn and Graſs flouriſh in the Fields, then they ſeem to *Laugh*, and all is well. Thus they repreſent by a Metaphor a thing unknown, and leſs known, by a thing that is better known.

Virgil, *Rident prata omnia.*

Pſal. 65.4.

And the Scripture is Abundant in the uſe of it, and this Expreſſion in the Text is of the ſame kind: *An habitation of God by the Spirit.* Now every one knows what his Houſe is to him, and what he doth in his Houſe. And when it is ſaid, *we are an Habitation of God through the Spirit*; this repreſents to us, both what *We* are in reſpect of God, and what *God* is in reſpect of us, *viz.* That God is preſent with us, as a Man is in his Houſe. That *God* doth maintain and ſuſtain; that God doth uphold, repair and amend; that he doth keep and defend us; that he is our Ruler, Governour and Director: For all theſe Performances are by the Maſter of the Houſe.

2Cor.6.16. And it is ſaid, *ye are the Temple of the Living God, as God hath ſaid, I will dwell in them, and walk in them, and they ſhall be my People, and I will be their God.* Which Words do repreſent Divine Aſſiſtance with great Advantage; not only help to us from one at a Diſtance when called in upon occaſion; but the Benefit of conſtant Preſence and Reſidence of the Inhabitant. *An Habitation of God thro' the Spirit.* By which expreſſion you have ſundry Intimations how many ways God is repreſented to us to be ours, to many and ſeveral Advantages; to divers great Effects and Purpoſes. For indeed Religion is the Bond of Union between God and Man, and tyes them together; *and engageth God to Man, as well as Man to God.* In the way of Religion there is Intercourſe and Communication between God and Man. God's Influence upon us; and our Return to Him. In Religion there are theſe two Things,

1. A

1. A Divine *Nature* in us:
2. A Divine *Assistance* over us.

1. For the first, we partake of the Divine *Nature* by Imitation of God in his Moral Perfections; and this is Religion in us, to Imitate God in these, which are his Holiness, Righteousness, Goodness, Truth. These are God's *Moral* Perfections; and 'tis Religion in us to Imitate God in these, and to exhibit God to the World in these, *viz.* in Holiness, Righteousness, Goodness and Truth.

In his *Natural Perfections* we cannot communicate with him, because we are Creatures. His Natural Perfections are such as these, Infiniteness, Eternity, Omniscience, Omnipotence, Omnipresence, his Immensity, Ubiquity, *&c.* In these no Creature can partake with him, nor by these declare him. But in his *Morals Perfections* we may, and ought; and 'tis Religion in us to Imitate God in his Moral Perfections.

2. Then for the other, A Divine *Assistance*; it doth certainly belong to our Religion that we have God Superintending over us; an Agent, that doth Assist, Help, Guide, Direct, and Govern us. And this is the Good Spirit of God. And they that are in Conjunction with God, certainly have the Governing Spirit of God Aiding, Directing, and Assisting them. As Degenerate and Apostate Creatures that are in Confederacy with the Devil, are hurried on by him to Acts of Sin, and Wickedness: So they that are in Reconciliation with God, they have their Superintendency, Conduct, Guidance, and Direction from the good Spirit of God; and upon this Account are said to be led and acted by the Spirit.

And in these doth Religion consist; *viz.* in a Divine *Nature*; in the Imitation of God in respect of his Moral Perfections, of Holiness, Goodness, Righteousness and Truth: And in the *Guidance* and *Superintendency* of the *Divine Spirit* over

our

our Minds. The former of theſe two ſecures us by way of form, and an internal vital Principle. For if we be in a State of Religion, we find an Internal Reconciliation with the Nature of God, and the Rule of Righteouſneſs: So that we Harmonize with God in theſe. And a diſplacency to all manner of Iniquity. So that if Evil be repreſented to us, theſe Thoughts will immediately riſe up in our Minds: Gen. 39. 9. *How can I do this Evil and ſin againſt God?* and give him an Offence. And therefore a Perſon that profeſſeth himſelf a Chriſtian, and would be thought a Man of Religion, he ſhould be aſhamed to be heard often to complain of Weakneſſes and Imperfections, Infirmities, and Failings in Self-government. For he ought to be known by the Effects of Goodneſs, and of the Divine Nature and Life; conſidering that he hath not only an Internal Principle within himſelf, but alſo that he is under the Direction and Aſſiſtance of the good Spirit of God. And if theſe two will not ſecure a Man to Act, and to determine him to do, as a Man in Religion ought to do; then there is no expectation from any Principle in the World for Action.

Thus far have I now declared to you what real *Religion* is. And now I will ſhew you ſome *Miſtakes* that have been about it.

1. With ſome, Religion is taken to be a *Syſtem* of certain Maxims and Propoſitions; and, it may be, thoſe not well conſidered, as the Concerns of Religion ought to be. Yea perhaps they are not well conſiſtent among themſelves. For ſome out of *Superſtition*, *dare not* examine, but refer themſelves blindly, and adore what other Men have taken up. Some out of *Deſign*, *will not* examine what they profeſs, becauſe they practiſe upon Religion; and Truth is not intended by them, but ſome Carnal Intereſt, or Worldly Deſign is carried on by them. Others out of *Idleneſs* and Self-neglect, *do not examine* their

their Religion; all their care being to be denominated by it. But here I muſt not be miſtaken; as if I intended to diſparage the Doctrinals of Religion. For though theſe are not ultimate and *Final* in Religion, I grant to you they are effective of Religion; but they are not Religion it ſelf. For a Man may be as ſound in Doctrine as any Man in the World, and yet be far from being Religious. Nay, I will tell you, that down-right Honeſty goes far beyond reputed Orthodoxy. But this I ſay alſo, that it is a thouſand pities, that theſe two ſhould be ſeparated; for both belong to Religion; to be *ſound in Judgment*, and *ſincere in Heart* and Affection. Let us not therefore miſtake, and think that Religion lies in a *Syſtem* of Propoſitions; for a Man may have all the Doctrines of Religion, as Notions in his Mind, and yet never have his Spirit mended by them, nor his Converſation regulated. Let us therefore not be miſtaken herein. Diſc. X. *Dogmata Fidei.*

2. Some Men take certain *Uſages*, Performances, and Forbearances, to be Religion: And it may be theſe not Accompanied with true Goodneſs, and real Piety of Heart, and a Holy Life. For in theſe True Religion conſiſts, and hath its Foundation, *viz.* in real Goodneſs, true Piety of Heart, and Uprightneſs of Life. And outward Religion is only valuable as it proceeds from an Inward Principle and Temper of Mind, and as it produces ſuch Effects. By true Religion a Man's Nature is Reconciled to the Everlaſting Laws of Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs and Truth. This is Religion, for a Man reſolvedly to govern himſelf in the whole Courſe of his Life, by the *Reaſon of things*, and the right of caſes, as the Rule of Actions; and to Act out of *Love to Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs*; being in his Temper reconciled to the Law of Righteouſneſs, and for his Principle, the Love of Rrighteouſneſs in his Heart; and *Pro rei ratione. Ex Amore Juſtitiæ.*

Vol. III. for his *Rule*, the Reason of Things, or the Right of Cases.

Religion in Man, is a settled Purpose and Resolution to obey God in all things, and universally to comply with his Mind and Will. But here, neither do I intend to Disparage the Voluntary Expressions of Devotion, but that Men should not lay Stress upon those things. It was *Eli's* fault, that he did so censure *Hannah* in the Voluntary Expressions of her Devotions to God. I leave these to every Man; and his Heart being Sincere, he may find Acceptance of God in them; but he must not lay any Stress upon them.

3. The 3d. Mistake is in Men's pleasing themselves, and taking up with some *Severities and Affectations*, which are their own proper and peculiar, instead of that which is the Life, and in which the Power of Religion consists, *viz.* Real Mortification, and Self-surrender. For if Pride and Conceit, or Vain-Glory take Place, or Envy, Malice, Ill-will or Displeasure; all that a Man does in Religion, is to no purpose. All these Modes and *Severities* which other ways he may take up with, will not make Compensation for these: So that a Man will but Cheat and Delude himself by them. I do confess that a Man may tye himself up to some Severities, if he please, and if he find it necessary for his Case. As for instance; he that cannot moderate himself and govern his own Appetite, must not Pro. 23. 31. *look upon the Wine when it is red in the Cup*, as *Solomon* saith. But a Man of Virtue and Sobriety, that is well able to govern himself, he is not bound to these particular Severities, Modes, and Affectations of Men. These are things which ought to be left to every Man's Prudence: He may use them if he please; and if he do so, he is not to lay Stress upon them, or to Value himself by them.

4. A 4th Miſtake of ſome Men lyes in this, that they take a *Form of Words*, and a *Set of Phraſes*, to be Religion; which do ſignifie the Party to be well pleaſed with himſelf, and full of his own Senſe, rather than the Edification of the Underſtanding. For if you come to explicate the Matter, they that Uſe them are at a loſs, and they that hear them to ſeek. Therefore, I ſay, we ought not to hold one another to our Form of Words and Phraſes, though we may uſe our liberty to expreſs our Conceptions as beſt fits our Apprehenſions; but we are not to Impoſe them upon others; and it is enough to Concord, and Agreement, that we agree in all Forms of Words in Scripture, though I can hit with him in no other. Yea, I ſhould think that he Underſtands as I do, or not far different, if he will expreſs himſelf in Scripture words. For we ought not to value our ſelves by affected Phraſes, nor impoſe Words upon others, that are not found in the Bible. A Diſc. X.

5. Miſtake is a Spirit of *Cenſoriouſneſs*. When Men aſſume to themſelves, to Judge, Cenſure, and Condemn others at Pleaſure. So that what is not their particular Opinon, they think is not of God. And truly here and there, the very *Knowledge* of our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt* is oppoſed to the *Moral Part of Religion*: Which has one of the ſtrangeſt Miſtakes that ever I met with in this World. Whereas the Faith of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* is purpoſely to Reſtore and Reinforce the Principles of God's Creation, and Re-eſtabliſh the Moral Part of Religion. And, that Men ſhould oppoſe one of theſe to the other, is one of the ſtrangeſt things imaginable. Whereas the Goſpel of our Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* doth *teach us to deny all Ungodlineſs and Worldly Luſts, and to live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly in this preſent World.* And it is ſaid, that we are *Created in Chriſt Jeſus to all good Works*: With ten thouſand Tit. 2. 12. Eph. 2. 10.

other plain places of Scripture to this purpoſe. Now in this caſe, there is both a great Miſtake in the Matter, and a Deviation from Chriſtian Ingenuity and Charity, to charge Thoſe Men as Oppoſers of the Grace of God in the Goſpel, that Preach up *Morality*. This I take for granted, that they muſt be very plain caſes, and of undoubted Reſolution and certainty, wherein any of us are warranted to Judge, Cenſure, or Condemn our Brethren.

6. Which I take to be the moſt dangerous Miſtake of all, becauſe the Error is not ſo ſoon ſeen and diſcerned: and it is this, when Men place the *Means* to be inſtead of the End, or take the Inſtrumental Part of Religion for the State of Religion. Now *the State of Religion* lyes, in ſhort, in this; *A good Mind, and a good Life*. All elſe is but *about* Religion, and hath but the place of Means or an Inſtrument. Thoſe things which we call *Duties*, as Hearing, Reading, Praying and the like, they all belong to the *Inſtrumental Part of Religion*. Not but that theſe things have place in Religion, and are charged upon us, upon account of Religion; but with very great difference. For there is ten thouſand times more of Religion, in that we call the *State of Religion*, which takes in a *Good Mind, and a Good Life*; than in thoſe things which are only the Inſtruments of Religion, and effective of it: But this is Religion it ſelf, and that to which all other things Tend; and for the attaining of which they are valuable, and ought to be eſteemed: but they are not of the Eſſence of Religion: For theſe may be, where that is not. And the Philoſopher ſaith, that ſome things are Good in their own Nature and Quality, and ſome things good, with relation to other things; ſome things are good in *themſelves*, and theſe make Men Good and Holy by their Preſence: But ſome things are Good only as they

Καθ' αὐτὰ. Διὰ ταῦτα. Ποιήσεις τινῶν. Κωλύσεις ἐνεργειῶν. Φυλακτικὰ πῶς. Ariſt. Rh. L. 1. c. 6.

they are *Operative* of other things that are good, or *Conservative* of Goodness; or that *Prohibit* those that are contrary unto Goodness. In the use, and by the Means of these things, which are the Instruments of Religion, Men do become Religious; and they are not Religious meerly by the Use of them, but by that which is attain'd by them. As to instance in those things mentioned before; Reading, Hearing, Meditating, Praying, and the like; all these belong to the *Instrumental* Part of Religion; and they are not Religion it self, but Productive, and Preservative of Religion, and Declarative of it. But then Religion is another kind of thing: These things that do Sanctifie by way of Efficiency, they do not certainly, they do not constantly do their Work. For an Efficient cause is sometimes hindred by something that it meets withal. But those things that are of the *Essence* of Religion, these always remain: In the other there may chance to be a contrary Disposition in the Agent or Recipient. And upon this account it is said, *Take heed how you Hear*: There may be a disaffection, that may make viod the Efficiency of the Instrument. Disc. X. Lu. 8. 18.

But now the Internal disposition of the Mind, *that* is Religion it self, as to State; as Modesty, Humility; Patience, Meekness, Gentleness, Sobriety, Tenderness of Spirit, a Loving Disposition, Goodness of Mind, a readiness to Compassionate, to Relieve, Help, and Supply: These are Vital Acts of Religion: These are not only Operative to Religion, but *Religion in themselves.* So as in respect of God, Reverence of the Deity, regardful Apprehensions of Him, Faith and Affiance in him, to Fear him, to Love him, and to Delight in him; these are the very Acts of Religion, as to God. Now the other are acts *towards* Religion. This is a great mistake in some Men, they think that the discharge of several Offices and Observances about Religion; that these

are Religion: But they are Miſtaken; for theſe things are but to work them into a Religious Frame. For Religion is a Holy and Devout Frame of Mind, and a good Life. And all thoſe things that have place in order to other things, if thoſe other things are not attained by them, they ſignifie little. Here is a Plain diſcovery, whether Men be indeed made better by the Inſtrumental part of Religion. When Men come not by the means to be ſettled in a State of Real Religion, become not really Humble, Modeſt, Sober, Temperate, Chaſt, *&c.* and brought to live in the true Reverence, Fear, and Regard and Awe of God, and to delight in him, to put their Truſt and Affiance in him: I ſay, if Men in the Uſe of the Inſtrumental Part of Religion, be not brought to theſe things; if they be fruſtrated, and attain not theſe effects, they are all vain, and no ways conſiderable with God.

Now to *Conclude* all in a word. You ſee what the Chriſtian Religion doth conſiſt of; an *Internal frame* and Temper of Mind, which is productive of a *Holy Life*, and true Motion towards God, in all the actions of Religion. It doth alſo import a *Divine Spirit* for our inlivening, acting and guiding of us. We are therefore to charge our ſelves with a due Preparation and Qualification of Mind, that we may be fit to receive and entertain ſuch an Inhabitant. If we are to be *an Habitation of God through the Spirit*; then we are to purify our Spirits, that we may be fit to entertain ſuch an Inhabitant. Deut. 23. 14. 'Tis expreſt by *Moſes*, that the Children of *Iſrael* ſhould take care that no unclean Thing ſhould be found in the Camp, becauſe God would walk thro' it. There ought to be no unclean Luſt found in us, nor naughty diſpoſition, as Pride, Envy, Malice, Hatred, Ill-will, or any Malignity of Mind; becauſe we are to entertain ſo glorious an Inhabitant as the Holy Spirit. For that God, who is the High

and

and Lofty One, He dwells alſo here below in qua- Diſc. X.
lified and prepared Souls, *viz.* in Souls that are pu-
rified, and diſcharged from Envy, Malice, Pride,
Ill-will, and ſuch like naughty Diſpoſitions.

Religion, as it doth denote an *Obligation* on our Parts *to God*, ſo it doth denote a *Diſpoſition* and preparation on our Parts *for God*. So that by Religion, we come to be in Fellowſhip with God; and by Irreligion and Profaneneſs Men come to be poſſeſt and hurried on by the Devil. By delight in, and by continuance in Evil, Men work themſelves into a Deviliſh State and Temper. Juſt as the Apoſtle ſaith unto *Simon Magus*, *Thou Child of the Devil,* Act. 13.
thou Enemy of all Righteouſneſs, why hath Satan filled 10.
thine heart? So that I may conclude with the Obſervation, that I have often quoted; every one of us in reſpect of his Mind and Soul, will be a place of Reſidence, either for the Good Spirit of God; or for the Evil Spirit: Every Soul is either the Spouſe of Chriſt, or elſe Adulterated by the Devil. Therefore conſent not to Iniquity; but always live in the Obſervance of the difference of Good and Evil: That ſo we may Invite the Divine Spirit to dwell with us, and take up his Abode in us. For if we live in Sin, and give Conſent to Iniquity, we give occaſion to the Divine Spirit to withdraw; and as he doth withdraw, the Evil Spirit will Approach.

DISCOURSE XI.

The Decency of Life recommended by Religion.

ROM. 13. 13.

Εὐσχημόνως ὡς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ περιπατήσωμεν.

Let us walk with a Grace.

Disc. XI.

I Mention the *Original*, becauſe I have taken the Liberty to vary from the *Tranſlation*, which ſaith, *Let us walk Honeſtly.*

Which Word *Honeſtly*, though it be included, yet it is not exact according to the *Greek*. *Let us walk gracefully*; as for the Credit of the Goſpel, Beautifully, Comely, Venerably, ſuitable and proportionable to the Principles of Chriſtianity. *Let us walk with a Grace*, ſo as to be above the Contempt of any; to command Reverence and Eſteem. This is the Import of the Words; and I find it thus uſed by other Authors. What is Comely, what is Orderly. So that if you do fulfil this Text, you are as Beautiful and as Orderly in your Motion, as the Sun, Moon and Stars, which are known by their exact Order. This is the account of the Words: And according to this Account I ſhall give you ſome few Obſervations. Only in the firſt place, I cannot but give my Text a great Advantage, by telling you, that it was the cauſe of the Converſion of that famous Inſtrument of God to the Church of God, St. *Auguſtine*; who as he was in Errour, ſo

1 Cor. 14. 40. εὐσχημόνως καὶ κατὰ τάξιν. Ariſt. Εὐσχήμων ἡ τεταγμένον.

ſo he was debauched, till by Providence he took up the Bible, and fell upon this place of Scripture. This to recommend the Words. Diſc. XI.

I ſhall now give you ſome *parallel Scriptures* that go upon the ſame Notion. *Whatſoever things are venerable. Follow that which is honeſt*; which is the Apoſtle's Compaſs whereby he guides himſelf; that that Men ought to aim at; that that is comely; that that is fit, that that a Man ought to aim at even in matter of Liberty. *Let all things be done decently, and in order.* This the Rule whereby to govern; that *all things be done decently.* If you go to the Old Teſtament, *He hath made every thing beautiful in his time*: Speaking how a Man ſhould uſe Providences in this Life. *Rejoice in the Lord, O ye Righteous; for Praiſe is comely for the Upright. Praiſe ye the Lord; for it is good to ſing Praiſes unto our God: for it is pleaſant; and Praiſe is comely.*

Phil. 4. 8, 1 Cor. 7. 35. 1 Cor. 11. 13. 1 Cor. 14. 40. Eccl. 3. 11. Pſal. 33. 1. Pſal. 147. 1.

And now, that I may lead you to underſtand the Notion, I will lay before you the *Rule* whereby you are to eſtimate and judge of this Decency, Comelineſs, and Order: And to this *Rule* you are to comply. The *Rule* is in *Things*. There is *the Reaſon of Things*; and this is an undoubted, infallible, unqueſtionable *Rule*; and a *Rule* that is as ſure as the Nature of God; as ſure as the Verity and Truth of God's Creation. For you are to underſtand, that *the Reaſon of Things, is a Law to the Reaſon of the Mind.* Truth and Goodneſs are firſt in *Things*, and then in the Mind and Underſtanding. My Mind is true, when I do underſtand as the Truth of Things is: My Mind is good, when I do comply with Things that are good, and abhor things that are evil. For it is not all one for a voluntary and intelligent Agent to do either one thing or another: For there are fixt Rules of Right; and whoſoever doth comply with theſe, doth Righteouſneſs; and who-

Vol. III. whoſoever doth vary from them, doth ſinfully. To know and diſcern this, is a Man's Underſtanding and Wiſdom: And to comply with it, is his Goodneſs, Integrity, and Uprightneſs. Therefore of the difference of Things; there are ſome that are *Comely*, Beautiful, Handſome, Graceful; and Becoming a Perſon of Ingenuity to do them: And others that are Ugly, Irregular, and Abſurd; which bring Shame and Guilt upon the Perſon ſo employed. Now by the help of their Reaſon and Underſtanding, Men have Power to judge; and by their Freedom have Liberty to do according to their Judgment. Therefore Man alone is able to do that that is Moral; The Underſtanding doth judge and diſcern what it ought to do (according as things are:) and then the Will ſhould follow. For how monſtrous were it, that the Blind ſhould lead the way?

There is that in God himſelf that is more Beautiful than Will. It is not Majeſty and Glory divided from Goodneſs, that is the Divine Perfection. But that Wiſdom and Power are in immutable Conjunction in Goodneſs: For where Wit and Power are without Goodneſs, there may be a Diabolical Nature. Thus you ſee the *Rule* whereby *to walk gracefully*, and to do Acts Worthy of God, and Worthy of ſuch noble Principles, as Reaſon and Underſtanding. You ſee you muſt look into *Things*; you muſt weigh and ponder Actions. There is in Motion and Actions That that is highly to Diſparagement; and That that is highly Acceptable. By your Underſtanding ſeek firſt Truth and Goodneſs in Things; and then in the uſe of your Liberty, do that that is Right. Put that that is Evil far from you; and cloſe with that that is Good: And in ſo doing, you ſhall *walk gracefully*; ſo as *Becometh the Goſpel.*

Phil. 2. 27.

And

And now I have given you the Rule; I will ſhew you *wherein* it lies, to do all Things *decently*. This Graceful Walking depends mainly upon *Four* Things. Diſc. XI.

1. The right *Government* of a Man's ſelf.

2. Good Carriage and *Behaviour* in Converſe, when in Company.

3. Upon Honeſt *Living*.

4. Upon uſeful Labour and *Employment*. I will be brief in all of them.

1. The *Right Government* of a Man's ſelf. A Man may abuſe himſelf when alone. He that hath not a Regard and Reverence of himſelf, as being a Creature endued with the Prerogative of Reaſon and Underſtanding, and the Priviledge of Liberty and Freedom; and therefore uſeth himſelf with Honour: He that will not reverence himſelf upon this Account; will not do it for God. Fear thy ſelf when thou art by thy ſelf: Do not ſtain thy ſelf; or wrong thy ſelf by any thing that is Filthy.

2. It depends upon *Good Behaviour* and Carriage in Company. If a Man misbehaves himſelf, every Man complains of him, and withdraws from his Company. Perſons of Misbehaviour render themſelves contemptible; and we avoid them, as they that bring a Blame to thoſe that are in their Company.

3. *Honeſt Living*. There is neither Beauty nor Comelineſs in any thing that is Bad in its Nature and Quality, but Uglineſs. A Man pollutes and defiles himſelf; and Alienates his Soul from God, whenſoever he conſents to Iniquity.

4. *Uſeful Labour* and Employment. He that lives unprofitably, is a Lumber to the place where he lives. *Telluris inutile pondus.*

I. If

Vol. III.

I. If you would walk gracefully, you muſt look to it, That you rightly *Govern your ſelves*: That you be Perſons of *Good Carriage* and Behaviour: That you *live Honeſtly*; and not idly. To fail in theſe things is a Man's Diſparagement; it lays him low; renders him contemptible. This I will ſhew you in Inſtances.

1 Sam. 3. 13. *Eli*'s Sons, by their Misbehaviour, made themſelves ſtink in the Congregation.

Gen. 9. 23. *Noah*, a good Man, he was diſtempered by drinking Wine; he lays himſelf open, and was contemptible to his Sons.

1 Sam. 21. 13. And then *David* (who otherwiſe did carry himſelf wiſely, ſo as it is ſaid *Saul* was afraid of him) he lays aſide his Prudence, that he might not be thought a potent and conſiderable Enemy: And he plays the Fool before *Achiſh*. So that he ſaith, *Take him away, we have no need of Mad-men.*

1 Tim. 4. 12. This was St. *Paul*'s Notion to *Timothy*; *Let no Man deſpiſe thy Youth.* How can he do that? Yea, do thou by good Carriage, and grave Behaviour, command Reverence and Eſteem. He that ſo behaves himſelf gravely, he may command other Men's Conſciences; though he cannot ſtop their Mouths. It is a true Rule, no Man is contemned or deſpiſed, but himſelf is the Cauſe. They that are Participants in any thing that is Baſe and Unworthy, though they were High and Low before, are now Equal: For Brethren in Iniquity are all alike. Perſons of Ingenuity and Righteouſneſs, theſe command the World, and have Reverence and Eſteem: When Men of Frothy and Ungoverned Minds expoſe themſelves to Contempt. And I make account that a Man is guilty of Miſbehaviour, and is to be thought a Perſon of an ungoverned Spirit,

Contemptus naſcitur ex ſe ipſo.

Facimus quos inquinat æquat.

1. When his Mind is *vainly Fraught* and Poſſeſſed.

2. When *Intoxicated with Pride* and *Conceit.*

3. When

3. When *Transported with Passion.*
4. When *Given up to Self-will.*
5. When *Rash*, *Hasty*, and *Precipitate.*
6. When *Weak*, *Impotent*, and *Unresolved.* A Word of all these. They are Failures in Government: These Men render themselves Contemptible.

1. Men that are *vainly Fraught or Possessed.* Where there is no Poise, no Balance in their Mind; but their Minds move upon every Shew, and every Appearance; for they have no Principle. Their Cogitation is vain; no fixed Apprehension. A great deal of Headiness, Inadvertency, and fond Persuasion. It is with them, as the common Proverb speaks (and Proverbs are the Wisdom of a Nation) just *as the Bell clinks, so the Fool thinks.* Any Saying, any Suggestion, without any Grounds of Reason, transports this vain giddy-headed Fellow, that hath never bestowed any Cost upon himself; hath never got himself to be in Habitude, by pre-consideration. Whence it comes to pass, that nothing is more Foolish or Vain than what this Man talks: And a Man may be Hours in his Company, before he hear one Word of sober Consideration. And the Reason of this is, because his Mind is *vainly Fraught and Possessed.*

2. When 'tis *Intoxicated with Pride.* This Man is High; but with what? Not with any thing that is Worthy; but with Wind. *He is poor, and blind, and miserable, and naked; but thinks himself rich.* He hath put himself into a Fool's Paradise; but all is but in Conceit. This Man *Lives in a Lye*; flatters himself. He hath just the Security of a blind Man; he sees no Danger. Whosoever is Proud and Conceited, *Lives in a Lye*; and there is nothing in him Sincere and True: Neither what he thinks, nor what he doth, nor what he promises himself; nor what he looks for. Rev. 3. 17.

3. When

3. When *Tranſported with Paſſion.* Paſſion before, and without Reaſon, is as bad for a Guide as an abſolute *Ignis fatuus.* It is a kind of Wild-fire. If in Paſſion thou doſt go about any thing, thou takeſt upon thee to do a manly Act, when thou art not a Man. A Man by Paſſion doth wholly Unman himſelf. When he ſaith, he did a thing in Paſſion, he doth thereby grant he was Unmanned. Paſſion ungoverned by Reaſon, is Madneſs; And what is ſaid of one Paſſion, is true of all.

Ira furor brevis.

4. When *Given up to Self-will.* Now this is a horrid Exhorbitancy; but too frequent, *For Men to do, becauſe they Will.* Nothing more Injurious, in reſpect of another's Right: Norhing more Unſafe, in reſpect of a Man's Self: Nothing more Heterogeneous, in reſpect of Rule and Order, than Self-Will. For as it is beſides a Creatures State; it is alſo an Oppoſition to Chriſt, and his Spirit. *Will alone* ſhould never be inſiſted on for Juſtification; unleſs in a Man's undubitable Propriety: And not then neither, if there be Reaſon in the Caſe. God only can ſay in the Language of the Pſalmiſt, *Whatſoever the Lord pleaſed, that did he.* Becauſe his Will is in an immutable Conjunction with Right and Goodneſs. Therefore he ſays, *I will have Mercy on whom I will have Mercy,* becauſe his Will is in conjunction with immutable Right. But this is no account for *us* to give. He that gives himſelf up to Self-will, he is a Rebel againſt God's Creation; he is a Confounder of Right; a Vexation to all Men. I have ſo much Zeal to decry this, that I could make it the whole of my Argument.

Pſal. 135. 6. & 115. 3.

Ex. 33. 19. Rom. 9. 15.

5. When *Raſh, Haſty, and Precipitate.* When a Man falls a doing before he hath ſet down and Thought, and ſoberly Parlied with the Reaſon of his Mind about his Action.

6. When

6. When *Weak and Unreſolved.* Many Men have this in their Minds, and think themſelves never the worſe for it, becauſe they account it Wariness. But I will tell you, to be Unreſolved after Conſultation, it argues Weakneſs: And through this Impotency, Buſineſs fails, though a Man have conſidered; Though he have conſulted, hath taken full advice in the caſe; yet through Impotency, he ſpoils his Buſineſs, hinders his caſe. It is the greateſt Encumbrance that can be, when wiſe Men, Sober and Good, are in Conjunction with ſuch an one. You can do nothing with this Man, but by Power. This for *Negatives.* Diſc. XI.

Now I will tell you in the *Affirmative.* In *four* Words, I will tell you what are the Ingredients that go to this gallant Temper; this doing things that are Venerable and repreſent Men Worthy and Eſtimable, fit to Rule the World and to Govern.

1. A *Conſtancy* regular and immoveable; ſo as to be found always the *Same.*

2. A *Patience* courageable and invincible: So as never to be diſturbed at any thing without. Poſſibilities and Contingencies no Wiſe Man's Reaſon is concerned in them.

3. Such an *Evenneſs* and compoſure, as not to be up and down, high and low.

4. Such a *Geſture and Carriage*, as may argue a Spirit neither Over-eager nor Fond.

Let me adviſe you to be exact in every one of theſe: For if you be wanting in any one, you fall ſhort of this *Gracefulneſs.* For *as dead Flyes cauſe the Ointment of the Apothecary to ſtink, ſo doth a little Folly him that is in the Reputation for Wiſdom.* Eccl. 10. 1.

And now that you may take the full Latitude, and Dimenſions of this Subject; I will yet add ſome further *Rules, and Directions.*

1. Let no Particular Perſon take upon him to Rule *general Apprehenſion.* For what all Men think,

no

Vol. III. no Particular Perſon hath Power to Over-rule. He is really a Fool that thinks himſelf Wiſer than all.

2. Let no particular Perſon be known by *Singularity*; unleſs of true Conſcience, and Unqueſtionable Virtue. If any one ſtand alone, he hath no Body to engage for him, but him that is his Creature and Slave; and it may be he doth it but outwardly, and contemns him in his Heart. Therefore no Affectation; and particular Modes; for theſe ſtand alone, and have none to engage in their Defence.

3. Let no Man *ſimply Imitate*: Unleſs the Excellency of the Party, or Worthineſs of the thing perſuade. Then it is not Imitation, but Worth and Excellency. A Man's own Mode, if natural, though Courſer, will beſt become him. To imitate, argues a Man, either Shallow, or a Slave: Shallow, and hath not Judgment of his own; or a Slave, and ſo doth Flatter him whoſe Slave he is.

4. Let no Man exceed his *own Meaſure*; for if he exceed his own Meaſure, he gets a fall. But in Modeſty he remains Unknown; and ſo there may be thought ſome Worth reſerved in Him.

5. Be ſure you never come within the confines of that that is *Moral evil*. No Man hath Credit enough to Patronize that that is Filthy and Diſhoneſt. It is Impotency and Deformity, not Power, to do that that is Evil. He that commits Sin ſinks below his own Nature. He that does that that is Unworthy, Diſhonours himſelf. This as to the Right Government of a Man's Spirit.

II. And now for his *good Behaviour* in Company I lay down theſe Rules.

1. Let not a Man be *Arbitrary*. No Uſurper over or Controuler of another Man's Senſe. For as this

is

is too much for any Body; ſo it is a matter of great Offence: And it puts Men (who otherwiſe would judge a Man a Tolerable Perſon) it puts them to make enquiry, and to put things into the worſt conſtruction: And this they will do in their own Defence. Whereas otherwiſe a Man might paſs the World without Cenſure, and his Infirmities may either be Compaſſionable, or over-looked Diſc. XI.

2. Be not *Cenſorious*, *Moroſe*, *Sour*, *Severe*. There is great Reaſon for this; becauſe we our ſelves require equal and fair dealing, and kind reception from Others: And how ſhall we ſecure this to our Selves, unleſs we our ſelves ſhew the Example? And theſe things are Acceptable to all Men, and lovely in themſelves. The other proceed from Pride in the Doer, and argue Baſeneſs, and a Sordidneſs of the Mind and Spirit.

3*dly*. Carefully avoid *two* Things; *Much ſpeaking*, and *ſpeaking of thy ſelf*. *Firſt*, He that ſpeaks too much in Company, he ſpends too faſt. Let no Man Overtalk the Senſe of his Mind: For in Society, there are always Wiſe-men; and for thee to Over-ſpeak, is to Abuſe their Goodneſs and Patience: Therefore let no Man *Over-talk*. And then *Secondly*, Let him avoid ſpeaking *of himſelf*: And indeed this is the moſt Fulſome thing that is. It imports, that this Man's Affairs are the moſt conſiderable in the World: And that all other Men ſhould attend upon his concerns. He takes ſo much upon himſelf, that he Debaſes all other Men: He gives a Law to other Men. St. *Paul*, when he was forced to enter upon his own Juſtification, he doth I know not how often interpoſe, *I ſpeak as a Fool*. Intimating, that a Man ought to be very Wary in talking of Himſelf; how he doth Impoſe upon others. Πολυλογία. Περιεαυτολογία. Pro. 10. 14. 17. 28. 2 Cor. 11. 23.

4. Keep *Order* in ſpeaking. Four Things belong to this.

Firſt, *Ears and Experience* are firſt to be heard:

Vol. III. *Elihu*, who was a ſmart young Man, he ſaith, that he durſt not take upon him to ſpeak till the Others that were Elder had done. Therefore let Years and Experience be firſt heard; for theſe have a double Advantage, having Years and Experience added to the Reaſon of their Minds: And theſe Men may put an End to a thing in difference, as ſoon as it is heard.

Job 32. 6, 7.

Secondly, Let *not two ſpeak together*: For which I take this Scripture, 1. *Cor.* 14. 30. The Divine Spirit within them did not act them furiouſly, as Men that are Frantick and Mad. And if this Spirit might be there Suppreſſed much more We that pretend to nothing extraordinary.

Thirdly, *Every Body* that is admitted into the Company, is to be heard: For otherwiſe you do worſe than turn him out of the Company.

Fourthly, Be ſure you *admit of Replies*: For elſe you will have nothing but Dictates, and no Reſults of true Reaſon, if there be not admittance of Replies. The

5*th*. Rule is that you be *ſparing in uſing Compariſons of Perſons*; becauſe you will more diſpleaſe one, than Gratifie the other. For he that is weighed and found too light, accounts himſelf aggrieved; and this creates Heart-burning.

And then Compariſon of *Things*. It is fit only for a very Wiſe Man to ſpeak ſo of things. Compariſons in the Mouth of a Fool, are as *Legs that are unequal*. Nothing is more contemptible to a Wiſe Man, than a Compariſon that comes not well off. Therefore be very tender and Careful in making Compariſons either of *Perſons*, or of *Things*: Of *Things*, that you be not deceived; of *Perſons*, that you do not Offend.

Prov. 26. 7.

6. While any thing is to propoſe, be ſure *keep out of Paſſion*. A Perſon of the greateſt Brain that I know ſaith, whoſoever is Paſſionate or Furious, or Zealous;

lous; for certain he is an Idolater: He doth wor- Disc. XI.
ſhip either fond Imagination, that is particular Idolatry; or elſe he is a dull Compromiſer. The Reaſon of the Mind is the beſt Inſtrument and the only Tool thou haſt to do what we call Man's Work: What cannot be done by it, thou canſt not do at all.

7. Howſoever thou think in thy ſecret Senſe, yet *do not deſpiſe any Body's Senſe.* Seem to give him thanks for his good Intent: And if he be conſiderable, his Senſe will not be deſpicable neither.

8. And laſtly, *Be content that Men*, that are not ſatisfied, *ſhould differ from thee* in Opinion and Apprehenſion. For every Man is to judge and diſcern for himſelf; and if his Reaſon ſeem better to him than thine; though it be not ſo, he cannot, if he be not a Slave, leave the Reaſon of his Mind, and come over to thine.

Theſe are Directions, which if obſerved, will greatly Recommend Men's Perſons, and Adorn Men's Spirits: If they be not obſerved, you will meet with Abatement of Affection and Good-will.

But to *conclude*, and further to Recommend to you this Perfection, which I call *Seemly Carriage and Good Behaviour*. I ſhall ſuggeſt to you theſe ſeveral Arguments by way of Motive.

1. Theſe are the true Companions of *Wiſdom*.

2. Theſe prepare the Mind to *Learning* and Knowledge.

3. Theſe diſpoſe the Mind to *true and Real Goodneſs*.

4. Theſe procure Men Value, and Eſteem, and Reverence.

5. Theſe uphold *Authority* and *Superiority*.

6. Theſe raiſe the thoughts of Men to ſearch and inquire after the *true Valuation*, and Eſtimation of Things.

Vol. III. 7. These discharge the Mind of Man from its *Levity.*

8. These Represent the *Divine Majesty.*

These are the considerations wherein this Perfection of *Graceful Walking*, *Seemly Carriage*, *Good Behaviour*, *Self-Government*, stands Recommended unto you.

DISCOURSE XII.

The Glorious Evidence, and Power of Divine Truth.

JOHN 7. 46.

Never Man spake like this Man.

Disc. XII. BEcause there are among us, those that are bold to call in Question the Being of God, those who dispute against the main and principal Matters of Christian Faith, under the Pretence of Reason: Reason, the Excellency of God's Creation: Therefore, have I taken these Words to deal with them with their own Instrument: And if for our Religion, if for our Christianity, we cannot produce greater Reason, than they have against them, let them both fall to the Ground.

You may consider these Words as they refer, either.

I. To the *Speakers*: Or,

II. To the *Matter* they do contain.

I. If

1. If to the *Speakers*, then the Speakers of these Words may be considered either as *Friends*, as *Enemies*, or as *Strangers*. For since they are not particularly named, they must fall under one of these Three. Disc. XII.

1. If you will have them *Friends*; then Friends you know speak in Love and Good-will, and out of Knowledge and Experience: And Good-will and Experience are probable Reporters: For Good-will makes Candid Interpretation and best Construction; and all Mens Words and Phrases are to be taken in good meaning, if they are not apparently otherwise. It is in *Isa.* 29. 21. represented as the greatest Cruelty, *to make a Man an Offender for a Word.* Then for Experience, this is one of the Three great Principles of Knowledge. The Three great Principles of Knowledge are Reason, Scripture, and General and Universal Experience. Now our Rule is in point of Experience, to believe every Man in his Faculty and Profession. Dry Reason is oftentimes doubted of: but when in conjunction with experience, we then think we have double Assurance. *Cuilibet credendum in Arte sua,*

2. But then *Secondly*, if you look upon them as *Enemies*. If an Enemy speak well of any Body, you will easily imagine the greater Reason to believe it. Whence it is said, if I have not a Friend, pray God send me an Enemy; that I may be sure to hear of my Faults. Friends often Palliate and Flatter, where Enemies abate nothing of what is true. It is an Observation of Wise *Solomon's*, That every *one* Flatters himself more or less in his own cause; but he that is on the other side coming to reply, doth *search him out.* It all proves, that upon hearing the first Party declare and shew, the Hearer thinks himself sure of the Right of the case; but when the other comes to declare, the former shews and appearances vanish. Whence the Rule is, whosoever Pro. 18, 17.

Vol. III. doth determine any thing before he hears a full Declaration on both ſides, he is not a Man of Juſtice, he himſelf is an unjuſt Arbitrator, though he happen to do right.

3. But *Thirdly*, I take theſe Reporters in the Text to be neither Friends nor Enemies, but *Strangers*; and that they found beyond what they thought or imagined, and ſo are Over-powered and convinced: For they were Officers under Authority, who are not wont to diſtinguiſh of Cauſes, but know only to execute and obey. Now theſe Men, they meet with that they looked not for; and fall down under the Evidence and worth of Truth; and ſo break out into this expreſſion and acknowledgment; neither conſidering their own Intereſt, in the diſpleaſing thoſe that ſent them; nor compliance with their Superiour's Will, *ver.* 48. 49. Then here is the Notion: Among other Excellencies of Divine Truth this is one, that when it is declared, It doth ſatisfie the Mind of Man, of its own uſefulneſs. The naked diſcovery of Truth is enough on Truths part, if there be not an indiſpoſition in the Receiver: Truth hath ſo much of ſelf-evidence, ſo much of clearneſs, that it will prevail and Over-power Men; unleſs there be an indiſpoſition in the Receiver that gives an incapacity. The like with this you have in *Matth.* 27. 54. When they heard and ſaw what fell out, they ſaid, *Verily it is the Son of God.* I look at theſe Words as the Effect of that Majeſty, Soveraignty and Authority, that Divine Truth hath over the Minds and Conſciences of Men. Truth, if it be fairly propoſed, it will find Entertainment in a Man's Mind, if a Man's Mind be not by indiſpoſition made uncapable: And that for two Reaſons.

Act. 8. 13. Num. 24. 23.

Magna eſt Veritas & prævalebit.

1. Becauſe of its Deſcent from God. The Soul and Truth have both one Father: Therefore he is called *the Father of Spirits*, *Heb.* 12. 9. and *the God of Truth*, *Pſal.* 31. 5. *He teaches the Mind of Man*

Knowledge,

Knowledge. The Inſpiration of the Almighty gives Understanding. Diſc. XII.

2*dly.* Becauſe of the Relation that Truth hath to a Man's Soul. Truth is a-kin to Man's Mind: So that you may ſay, as *Adam* ſaid of *Eve*, *Gen.* 2. 23, *Thou art Bone of my Bone, and Fleſh of my Fleſh.* So ſaith the Mind of Man of Truth, thou art near of Kin to me: Or as increated Wiſdom to God, *Pro.* 8. 34. So Truth to the Soul. *I was with thee as one brought up with thee, I was daily thy Delight.* No ſooner doth Truth come into the Soul's ſight, but the Soul knows her to be her firſt and old Acquaintance: If Truth doth but appear, the Soul reſigns up it ſelf to it; nothing is more Natural to Man's Soul, than to receive Truth from any Perſon.

This you may obſerve conſidering the Words as they refer to the Speakers. Take either of theſe Accounts, take them in what conſideration you will, we may conclude thus from what theſe Men ſay; That the Doctrine of Chriſt comes with great Evidence and Aſſurance of Truth. For theſe they were moſt probably Perſons either Prejudiced already; or meer Strangers: Yet theſe Men who expected not, are overpowered, and convinced, and forced to make this Acknowledgment: *Never Man ſpake like this Man.*

II. But I will not lay the ſtreſs of my Argument upon the Credit of thoſe that ſpake theſe Words: but I will found my Argument in the Quality of the Matter: yet it is ſomewhat, if theſe Men that are either *Enemies*, or *Strangers*, are ſo far ſubdued as to confeſs the Matter.

Now the Doctrine of Chriſt comprehends two ſorts of things.

1. It doth Reinforce and further Acknowledge the indubitable Principles of God's Creation. Thus it comprehendeth all *Moral* Notices; all Piety to

Vol. III. God, good Government in Man's own Perſon; and all Equitable dealing with Men.

2. Or elſe it doth conſiſt of Pardon of Sin, and Recovery; and upon what Terms we are reconcilable to God.

Concerning the *former*: Nothing is more knowable than the great Inſtances of Natural Truth, *viz.*

Mic. 6. 8. *To do Juſtly, to Love Mercy, and Walk Humbly with*
Tit. 2. 12 *God*: To *live Godly, Righteouſly and Soberly in this preſent World.*

Concerning the *Latter*, nothing more credible and worthy of Belief than the great matters of Faith; *viz.* Pardon of Sin in and through Chriſt, upon our Repentance and Faith in him.

Now the *former* of theſe are abundantly knowable, if we conſider our ſelves.

It is that we are under a deep Obligation to; to live in Obſervance of God, to obey him, and fulfil his Will; to place Affinity, Truſt and Confidence in him; and (which is the Sum of Natural Religion,) to imitate him whom we do Worſhip; and endeavour, in our Meaſures and Degree, to be *That* we aſcribe to God, Fulneſs and Perfection. And then toward our Fellow-Creatures, to deal Righteouſly. And in the Government of our Selves, to live Soberly.

Religio eſt imitari quod colimus.

The *Latter* is matter of eaſie Belief; *viz.* That God will pardon Sin to thoſe that repent and believe.

1. Upon the Suppoſition that Man was never better than Finite and Fallible.

2. That God is Original to the Creature. And,

3. That God is Merciful and Compaſſionate.

Theſe three make it very credible, that God will, by ſome means or other, pardon Sin. That God at firſt made the Creature Finite and Fallible. Man is God's Creature, and God ſtands in a Fatherly Relation to him; therefore he will entertain

tain returning Prodigals. God is the first and chiefest Good: And therefore it is natural to shew as much Mercy and Compassion as the Case will admit of. Disc. XII.

I therefore conclude, that all the Instances of Christ's Doctrine (which consists of two sorts of things: *viz.* of the reinforced Principles of God's Creation, which are matters of Self-evidence, and indispensible; and of the way of Recovery and Reconciliation to God:) They are either fairly knowable, if a Man will use his Understanding; or if he do consider, in things of Revealed Truth, as Pardon of Sin in and through Christ, to those that repent and believe the Gospel (which is the great matter of Faith,) nothing is more worthy of Belief. The former of these, the great Instances of Reason; they are of awakened Minds, easily found out. The Latter of these, the matters of Faith; have of prepared Minds, fair Admittance and easie Entertainment.

Now this I am to speak to; and I shall give you several Arguments to settle us in the Entertainment of Divine Truth.

I. The *first* is the *Concurrence* and *Consent* of Heathens and Strangers: And these concur in all Instances of Morality: And in these they speak to shame us; and too many of us are below them. And then for many things that are circumstantial concerning *Christ*, we have great Testimony of these kind of things from them.

II. I shall instance in the Representation that is made us by Truth, concerning God.

III. The Ingenious Operation of Divine Truth upon Mens Minds.

IV. Its Fitness to Man's State: And,

V. The Agency of the Divine Spirit in pursuance of it.

I. As

Vol. III.

I. As to Morals, we have the full *Concurrence* with us of Heathen Authors; all who were of the reformed Heathens: And we account he is incompetent to give Teſtimony in Morality, who himſelf is vicious: And every Man is vicious upon a Moral Account, that is ſtupidly Ignorant, or Diſſolute and Profane: And his Senſe and Judgment in point of Truth is inconſiderable, and no more to be valued, than in a Tryal at Law the Teſtimony of him is, that is one of the Parties. In *Morals*, All of all Nations that have attained to any improvement in their Intellectuals, or any ways were refined in their *Morals*, they all concur with us: So that in theſe there is a Univerſal Acknowledgment. For this is a good Rule, and a true Notion; The Univerſal Acknowledgment of things for true, doth not lie in every individual Perſon's receiving it; but in the even and true Proportion that it bears to the Univerſal Reaſon of Mankind, if that comes to judge; for otherwiſe you would have nothing of Univerſal Acknowledgment. But it doth ſtand upon the even and true Proportion that things bear to the Univerſal Reaſon of Mankind. And this is all that can be ſaid, when Men pretend to prove any thing by Univerſal Conſent: And ſuch an Acknowledgment you have in theſe great Truths, which are the Fundamentals of Religion. All Men have acknowledged Dependance upon, and Obligation to God: All Men have acknowledged good Government of Mind: All Men have acknowledged Righteouſneſs, and equitable Dealing with others. Theſe have been denied by none but Perſons that have groſly neglected their Underſtandings. And then for *Revealed Truth*. In their Hiſtories the Heathens concur with us in many things that the Apoſtles do record. And although it is true, that there hath been in the World, in ſeveral Places, and in ſeveral Ages, groſs Self-neglect in the great Materials of Natural Know-

Omnes reformatiores Gentium.

ledge

ledge, Mind and Underſtanding have been in moſt Men Uſeleſs and Unemployed; and there is, and hath been, invincible Ignorance of the great Points of *Revealed Truth*: Yet of this I am aſſured, that there hath not been any conſiderable Oppoſition againſt the main Principles, either of *Natural* or *Revealed Truth*, by thoſe that have had any knowledge of them. No Society of Men, that are valuable, either for any Competency of Knowledge, or Proportion of Goodneſs, have ever riſen up in Oppoſition, either againſt the great Inſtances of *Morality*; or the great Article of *Chriſtian Faith*, *viz.* the pardon of Sin in and through Jeſus Chriſt, to them who repent. So that theſe have had Univerſal Submiſſion to, if not Acknowledgment. And the Chriſtian World, though it hath been miſerably ſhattered and divided in Particulars, and multiplied into Sects and Parties, yet they have agreed in the great and weighty Truths of Reaſon and Chriſtianity; ſuch as are fixed and of the greateſt Magnitude. I ſay, the Chriſtian World, take it as it is, divided and ſhatter'd in particular, yet doth agree in the great and weighty Truths of Reaſon and Chriſtianity; ſuch as are fixed and of the greateſt Magnitude. Yea, go to the *Mahometan* World; neither *Moſes* nor *Chriſt* are charged with Impoſture. They go along with us to *John* 14. 16. and there they part from us. They tell us, that Chriſt promiſed that the Father would *ſend another Comforter*; who they underſtandd to be their *Mahomet*; and that our Saviour put in his Name; but his Diſciples after left it out. *Jeſus* they acknowledge a great Prophet; and deny that he was crucified; but that God took him out of their Hands when they *fell to the Ground*, *John* 18. 6. So taking ſome other like him, they carried him to the High-Prieſt, and he was crucified by Pilate: This is, as they think, in Honour, and Kindneſs, and Reſpect to him.

Diſc. XII.

[1] Ἀλλὸν παράκλητον δώσω ὑμῖν.

And

And this is my first Argument. For the Truths of the *first Inscription*; there we have a full *Concurrence* of all Persons Valuable that have ever been in the World; and That amounts to an Universal Acledgment. And then for *Revealed Truth*, many things that we have in the Story of *Christ*, are averred by other Historians: And I shewed you how far the *Mahometans* go along with us. And then for the Truth it self, how credible it is, will appear, if you consider, that Man was made Finite and Fallible; and that God stands in relation of a Father to him; and that he is the first and chiefest Goodness: Which represents this Notion to us, That God, upon fitting Terms, would pardon Sinners, *viz.* upon their Repentance; and would do what is worthy of him for the Recovery of lost Sinners. And this is a great Advancement against Atheists, and against Infidels; who are Prodigies, and go in a Contradiction to all Mankind.

But further I do suppose two things.

1. That that which is materially a Lye, would be deprehended in length of time.

2. I do suppose another thing, and that is concerning God: Considering his Goodness, his Care of his Creatures, his Love to Truth, and the respect he bears to those that worship him; that he would not suffer their good Meaning towards him to be abused.

1. That that which is materially a *Lye*, would be deprehended in length of time. Error is never long-lived: But Truth is from Eternity. What is Ancient may be received with double Credit: For it hath had the proof of all Ages before. I do reasonably suppose, if there were any thing in our Faith and Religion that were not solid and substantial; it having passed through sixteen Ages; that Men that had lived before us, by their Search and Enquiry into it, would have deprehended the Faults,

Faults, and admoniſhed us of them. Therefore we may take it for granted, the great things of our Religion are Sincere, Solid, and True. That which comes down to us through ſeveral Ages before us, is likely to be ſincere and true; becauſe all Wits have been employed to ſearch into it. Truth is brightened, as Iron, by motion. Diſc. XII. *Ld. Verulam.*

2. Concerning *God*. Conſidering his Goodneſs, his Care of his Creatures, his Love to Truth, the Reſpect he bears to thoſe that worſhip him; we may alſo reaſonably ſuppoſe, that he would not ſuffer their good Meaning toward him to be abuſed; but that if any Cheat did ſtart up, he would, in ſome time, diſcover it. Without doubt he would not ſuffer any thing that were falſe to take ſuch place, and for ſo long time, without ſome conſiderable Controul and Check.

Now if any Man take upon him to reply upon me thus: Why Yes, Hath not God given Teſtimony? What ſay you to the abundance of Cheats and Impoſtures in the World? What ſay you to *Mahometiſm*? To the heady Oppoſitions of Factions? To the great Atheiſm, and Irreligion, and Prophaneneſs amongſt Multitudes of Men?

A ſhort Reply to this.

An Appearance of God to confound and diſparage an Impoſture, would be in ſome way of Worth, Perfection, and Excellency. Now for the ſtupid Impoſtures of Men, and the irrational Impoſtures of *Mahomet* (which was not fully credited in his time:) if God had given Teſtimony thereto, it would have been in a way tranſcendent to Man's Underſtanding; it would not have been in a way of Debauchery. If God appears to give his Atteſtation, it would not be in a way of ſtupid Ignorance: It would not be in a way that the Reaſon of Man could challenge and reprove; but in a way of Excellency, Purity and Holineſs. But the things

Vol. III. things in the Objection, are things of Baſeneſs and Deformity; and rather certifie us that God had withdrawn from thoſe Perſons, and left them upon their high Provocation.

II. I now paſs to intrinſick Arguments: For this is an Argument very foreign; but yet proper for thoſe that pretend to Wit and Parts. Now I go to intrinſick Arguments; and the firſt ſhall be this.

The Repreſentation that Divine Truth, both Natural and Revealed, makes concerning God, to the Mind of Man: And all Divine Truth, whether Natural, the Light of God's Creation, or Revealed, they do all rightly repreſent God; according as a Man's Mind, if duly uſed, would conceive of God. And this is a great Argument. Concerning God; both Natural and Revealed Truth repreſent him Lovely, Amiable, and Beautiful in the Eyes of Men. Whatſoever is ſaid of God, either acknowledged in Scripture, or declared; whatſoever you have contained in theſe Books concerning God, it is worthy of God, and is conſiſtent with what Man is made to think and know of God. This is as demonſtrable as any thing that was ever held forth in the World. It is truly Divine and Godlike to pardon Sin upon fitting Terms; to do Good, and to Compaſſionate, and to Relieve and Gratifie. And on the other ſide, this is Diabolical and Devilliſh, to Deſtroy, to Worry, to Wrong, to Oppreſs: And where is the Beaſtly and Devilliſh Nature, there is Cruelty, and a readineſs to deſtroy. Now what Declaration doth the Bible make of God? *Gracious, Merciful, ſlow to Anger, of great Kindneſs.* Scripture doth awaken us to think of many things of God and our ſelves; which otherwiſe we ſhould have neglected; which when we have conſidered, we are ſure enough are right and true; being very agreeable to a Principle with in us, where-

Divinum eſt condonare, gratificari, benefacere.

Θηριῶδες δυσμενὲς.

Neh. 9.17.

by

by we know them. Concerning God's Diſpoſition, the Scripture tells us, that, Diſc. XII.

Firſt, As to himſelf, his Nature and Diſpoſition, he is Placable, and ready to Forgive. And any Man that is in the uſe of ſober Reaſon, will acknowledge, that it is a thing of faireſt Belief; that the Original of Being, the Fountain of all Goodneſs, the firſt and chiefeſt Good, is of a placable Diſpoſition.

Secondly, In reſpect to us: That God will pardon and forgive Sins upon fitting Terms; though no Creature can Merit it, nor any Sinner be fit to procure it; yet infinite Goodneſs is enough to give Hope. So that any probable Narration made in the Name of God, of the Way and Means; or Circumſtances whereby it is to be brought about; fairly induceth Belief with ſober, ſerious, and conſiderative Minds. Now the Sum of all that is declared and ſuperadded to God's Creation, is only theſe two, *Repentance from dead Works*, and *Faith in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. Now concerning theſe Two, I will offer but Three things, and ſo conclude. Act. 20. 21.

1. Nothing in the World can be required upon Terms of greater Juſtice and Equity, than Repentance of a Sinner. What more juſt and fit, equal and reaſonable in it ſelf, than to revoke what we have done amiſs, condemn our ſelves in it, aſk God Forgiveneſs, and return to Duty? For ought not an Inferiour, if he offend againſt a Superiour, to aſk Forgiveneſs, and return to Duty? Therefore *Repentance from dead Works* ſpeaks for it ſelf. Then for *Faith in the Lord Jeſus*: Is it not fit that if God pardon, he ſhould pardon in what way he will? and if God declare that he hath ſet up a Prince and a Saviour, a Head of Recovery; is it not fit that all thoſe, that expect a Remiſſion of Sins, ſhould acknowledge him for a Head.

2. They

2. They are not only just and fit in themselves, but satisfactory to the Reason of our Minds, tending to pacify and quiet our Consciences. And were they not such as they are, we could not believe them; for the Mind of an Impenitent cannot receive Consolation. The Sense of Repentance will be better satisfaction to his Mind, than any Foreign Testimony whatsoever.

Mens impœnitentis non sedatur.

3. These Terms are Restorative to our Natures, and make us capable of Happiness. For he that is a Sinner; till he do Repent, is upon Terms of Hostility against God. It is necessary therefore that a Man have in himself the Sense of Repentance for his Sin, without which he can never think that his Sin can be Pardoned, or his Person accepted by God.

And this is my second Argument: The Representation Divine Truth makes of God, to the Mind of Man.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XIII.

The Glorious Evidence, and Power of Divine Truth.

JOHN 7. 46.

Never Man ſpake like this Man.

I Take it for granted, that what theſe Men ſaid, is true; though not true becauſe theſe Men ſaid it. And I have obſerved from hence, the Majeſty, Soveraignty, and Authority of Truth; that, be the Speaker whom it will, yet through the Clearneſs and Evidence of Truth, it doth ſurprize Men, and take them Unawares, Over-bears them, and ingeniouſly forceth Perſons indiſpoſed and unprepared, into an acknowledgment, upon its own appearance to them. And indeed nothing in the World is more Powerful and Prevailing in the Minds of Men, than to ſpeak in the Evidence and Demonſtration of Reaſon. Our Common-wealth conſiſts in the Government of Reaſon: Reaſon in our Converſe and Society is beyond all force and violence.

Diſc. XIII.

From theſe Words I have made it appear at large, that the great Notices of *Natural Knowledge*, and the main Articles of *Chriſtian Faith*, they have had a very great Acknowledgment in the World in the ſeveral Ages of it; and this is an Argument to prevail with the Atheiſt and Infidel. I now intend to go upon Intrinſick Arguments; and the next is this.

II. The Repreſentation that Divine Truth, both Natural and Revealed, makes of God to the mind of Man. (1.) Concerning God, *as to himſelf*; both agree in this, to Repreſent God placable, compaſſionate, reconcilable: And ſo in true Reaſon, a Man would imagine.

(2.) In reſpect to us as Sinners, though in a deplorable and forlorn condition; that God will not be wanting to afford fitting Aid and Aſſiſtance for a Sinner's Recovery. And *theſe* I look upon to be Principal matters of Chriſtian Faith.

God is ſpoken of conſiſtently with what the Mind of Man is apt to think: For nothing is more Apparent in it ſelf, than that it is proper to the Divine Nature to Pardon, to Gratifie, do good, relieve and compaſſionate: And that the moſt oppoſite from Good, is Cruelty; an aptneſs to deſtroy, to grieve, and oppreſs: And the Scripture doth offer it to our Mind concerning God; which though we ſhould of our ſelves not have thought of, yet when it is offered it *is* agreeable to the Principles of God's Creation in us, whereby we know that it is true. I might have been incogitant all my days of theſe things, which when offered, I know to be true: For there is a Connaturalneſs between Divine Truth, and the Mind and Soul of Man. I now proceed to the next Intrinſick Argument; and that is a mighty Argument: It is,

III. The Ingenious *Operation* that Divine Truth, Natural and Revealed, hath on a Man's Mind. (And this is a mighty diſtinction in Religion; Natural, and Revealed. Natural, conſequent upon God's Creation; and Revealed, that is, ſuperadded by Revelation of God in Scripture.) Now from this ingenious Operation that this Divine Truth, both Natural and Revealed, hath upon the Minds and Underſtandings of Men, will

will I prove that this is from God. For this Truth calls Creatures to dependence upon God, to commit themſelves to him, and reſign up themſelves to his Will. Now how doth this tend to our Hearts-eaſe, and the quiet and ſatisfaction of our Minds? For we know the beſt of us are often at a loſs, and do not know what to reſolve, what to do next; and the Affairs of the day do tranſcend the Capacity of Man's Mind and Underſtanding. Now we are to remember that we are Creatures, ſecond cauſes, and ſo not Primarily concerned; ſo not to go out in our own Name; but in reſpect of God, we are only Inſtruments; and we know that Inſtruments are determined; and no diſparagement to an Inſtrument if it fail. Now this, Divine Truth teacheth us; To acknowledge God, and finally Aim at his Glory, and to reſt in him. Now how is this for the quiet and ſatisfaction of our Minds? For we know that God is Greater and Wiſer than we are, and every way Better; and if it had not been good for the Creation, ſuch or ſuch a thing could not have fallen out. Religion doth aſſign to Man his own proper place reſpectively to his true Centre: The Grace of the Goſpel, whereby we hope to be ſaved, doth not only give countenance, help and aſſiſtance, and real furtherance to natural Truth, which was loſt much by Man's Apoſtacy from God, and ſo needed a hand to help it up: But it alſo doth its own and proper work, by emptying the Mind of Man of wilfulneſs and preſumption, ſo making room for the help of Grace, and Divine Aſſiſtance and Forgiveneſs. The Grace of God, to which we owe our Salvation, it doth not only give aſſiſtance, recovery, and furtherance to all the Principles of real Righteouſneſs and true Goodneſs; which do very much need a help for their Recovery, becauſe of Man's Fall; but the Grace of God doth its own work beſides; it Diſc. XIII.

Vol. III. empties the Mind of fond Perſuaſion, fooliſh Self-conceit and preſumption, and ſo makes room, gives a Man Capacity to receive from God, both the grace of Aſſiſtance, and alſo makes him capable of Forgiveneſs. Further, to purſue this Argument: A true Goſpel Spirit doth excell in Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Modeſty, Humility, Patience, Forbearance: It bears Univerſal Love and Good-will; and theſe qualifie and fit Men to live in the World. Thoſe Men keep to good Behaviour, who are indued with Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Humility, Patience, Forbearance: A Goſpel Spirit overcomes evil with good; teacheth Men to return Courteſies for Injuries. Had we a Man among us that did live an exact Goſpel-Life, he would be the moſt Lovely, Uſeful Perſon under Heaven: Had we a Man that was really Goſpelized; were the Goſpel Life, and Soul and Spirit to a Man, as Principles upon a Moral conſideration are; this Man, for every thing that is excellent, would be extraordinary in the Eyes of all Men in the World: Chriſtianity would be recommended to the World by his Spirit and Converſation. For the Life of the Heavenly State, ſo far as it can be expreſt to us, is delivered in the Goſpel-Law and Rule; and is put into an Act in a Goſpel Spirit, and Life. The Fruit of the Spirit in us is in all Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs and Truth. Were any Man ſincere and true in the ways of Religion, he would not be grievous or intollerable to any Perſon: But would command Reverence and Eſteem. A true Goſpel Spirit is tranſcendently Eminent for thoſe things that are lovely in the Eyes of Men; Humility, Meekneſs, Charity, Patience, Univerſal Love, Good-will; and ſo far as any one is Chriſtian in Spirit and Power, ſo far he is Refined, and Reformed by theſe Graces. For all I have ſaid, I refer you to the Apoſtle St. *Paul* in *Gal.* 5. 19. *The Works of the Fleſh are, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanneſs, Laſciviouſneſs, Idolatry,*

Idolatry, Witchcraft, Hatred, Variance, Emulation, Wrath, Strife, &c. All of a kind, Birds of a Feather. Now these things speak Hell broke loose; they are from Hell, and tend to Hell. But on the other side, what are the Fruits of the Divine Spirit in Man? *verse the* 22. *The Fruit of the Spirit is Love, Joy, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith*; and all these make Heaven in Degree. Religion keeps the Mind in a good Frame and Temper; establisheth a healthy Complexion and Constitution of Soul, fit to discharge it self duly, in all its Offices toward God, in the first place; its own settlement, next; and last of all, toward all its Fellow-Creatures. Whereas the Mind of the Prophane is a very Wilderness, where Lusts and Exorbitant Passions bear all before them; more fierce and cruel than Wolves, Bears and Tygers, *Isa.* 57. 20. *The Wicked is like the raging Sea, always casting forth Mire and Dirt.* The Heavenly State consists in the Mind's Freedom from these kind of things: From impotent and unsatiable desires, which toss a Man's Soul, and make him restless: From eager and impetuous Love; and by these Men are torn in pieces: From vain and disappointing Hope, which sinks Men into Melancholy: From lawless and exorbitant Appetite: From froathy empty Joys: From dismal presaging Fears, and anxious self-devouring Cares: From inward Heart-burnings: From Self-eating Envy: From swelling Pride and Ambition: From dull and black Melancholy: From boiling Anger and raging Fury: From a groaning aking Conscience: From Arbitrary Presumption: From all rigour, sowerness, and severity of Spirit. These make Men's Minds, devoid of Religion, to seeth like a Pot, and to boil within with the Fire and Pitchy Fumes of Hell: And as Outragious, as when the great *Leviathan* doth cause the Waves of the Sea to cast out Mire and Dirt. But on the other side, things

Vol. III. that are Connatural to the ways of Religion, these require a Mind that is not subject to Passion: But in a steady and quiet Posture, where there is no Tumult of Imagination heard. I find among the *Rabbies*, that if a Prophet fell into a Passion, the Spirit of Prophecy left him. There is no Genuine proper Effect of Religion, where the Mind of Man is not composed: the breakings in of God upon us do require the Mind in a steady Posture. For the great design of Christ's coming into the World was to Revive and Propagate the Divine Life, which was extinct by Man's Apostacy and Sin. Men not born of God, but immersed into the brutish Life, cannot Lodge in their Minds any true Notion of what Heaven and Salvation means: All that they imagine is some Local Glory, sometimes suitable to that Notion of Happiness which the sensual Mind imagines to it self; to wit, the fullest Gratification of the sensual Principle: That is the highest they have. For we cannot go higher in Understanding than we are in Being. So these Men fancy the possibilities of Happiness to be in the several compliances of the sensual Appetites with their suitable Objects of delight. He is not capable of understanding the necessity and reason of Mortification, and inward renewal, in order to admittance into Heaven. They do not look upon Heaven as a State and Temper of Mind; to which it is requisite, to be Reconciled to the Nature of God: But they look upon it to be some Foreign Application. But we are happy by the Divine Love ruling in our Lives, by resignation in all things unto God, and becoming like him. Now this is my Argument, a Declaration of a Principle that is Antecedent, by the Effect that is consequent. Things are very well known what they are in being, by what they are in working. Now I may say of Divine Truths (those that are founded in Principles of God's Creation, and the main Articles of Christian Faith(

Faith) I may ſay of either of them, theſe Truths do ſatisfie the Mind of Man. For *Natural Truth* hath this Evidence in it ſelf, that if you put it in competition with any thing, that any Atheiſt or Infidel whatſoever can ſay: I ſay, put that that Reaſon (which is the Light of God's Creation) doth give report, of thus in competition, it will make it appear to have a greater Foundation in Nature, and the Grounds and Principles of Common Reaſon, than any things that any Atheiſt or Infidel doth ſet up againſt it to counterbalance it. Then *Revealed Truth* doth not only give aſſurance to Natural; but it doth alſo do its own proper work, teacheth a Man to return to his own place, duly to acknowledge God, and depend upon him; and empties a Man's Mind and Thoughts of all Preſumption, Arrogance, and Self-aſſuming; ſo that a Man is fit to receive the Grace, and Forgiveneſs, and Pardon of Sin: For the Proud is too ſelf-conceited to be beholden to God; and too Full to receive: And God, *that gives Grace to the Humble, reſiſts the Proud.* And this is my third Argument. My Diſc. XIII.

IV. Is the *Proportion* that Divine Truth (both Natural and Revealed) hath, and the fitneſs it bears to Man in his condition; take him either as he comes into the World, or as he hath uſed himſelf. Now, there is a ſpecial ſuitableneſs of *Natural Truth* to a Man in the State of God's Creation: and a ſuitableneſs of *Revealed Truth* to Man in his lapſed and fallen Condition. And *firſt*, for the ſuitableneſs of the Truth of God's Creation, which we call Natural Religion: It was the very Temper, Complexion and Conſtitution of Man's Soul in the Moment of Creation: It was as Connatural to his Soul, as Health to any Man's Body. So that Man forced himſelf, offered violence, and went againſt his Make, when he departed from it. It is the ſelf ſame thing in Moral Agents to comply with the order of Reaſon, as it is in inferiour

Idem eſt in Moralibus ſecundum Ordinem Rationis, ac in inferioribus ſecundum Naturam.

Vol. III. feriour Creatures, to act according to ſenſe; or in Vegitables, to be according to their Natures. This is concluded Univerſally by all Moraliſts. It is therefore as Natural for a Man to live in Regard, Reverence and Obſervance of God; to Govern himſelf by Rules of Prudence and Moderation; to live in love, and behave himſelf well in God's Family; as it is for the Sun to give light, the Fire to give heat, heavy things to fall downwards, light things to be carried upwards. How far then are we exorbitant! Since it is ſo rare among us exactly to comply with the Reaſon of things, and ſince there is that exactneſs among the lower order of Beings, that they never vary from their Nature. Nothing is more certain and true, than that all Vice is Unnatural; all that is called Sin, all that is called naught, it is deſtructive to humane Nature; and a Man forceth himſelf when he doth it.

Then for the *other*, the ſuitableneſs of *Revealed Truth* to Man in his lapſed State. A Man who knows himſelf, feels want of inward Health and Strength: Then reading the tenor of Revealed Truth, he will be ready to ſay, *ſic expectavi, ſic inveni*, I found as I have expected. Never did Diſeaſe and Phyſician more happily meet, *viz.* Baſeneſs on our Part, (for every Sin is a baſe Act) and the Spirit of Ingenuity in the Grace of the Goſpel. This is now my fourth Argument. The fitneſs of *Natural Truth* to Man in the State of God's Creation: And the fitneſs of *Revealed Truth* to him in his Lapſed State and Condition. Truth of the firſt Inſcription eſtabliſheth the Souls Health, Complexion, and Conſtitution. Truth of After-Revelation is the Souls Cure and Remedy, the Minds Eaſe and Relief.

V. The fifth is the Agency of the Divine *Spirit* in purſuance of what God hath done, and before laid the Foundation of. For God ſent not his Truth

Truth into the World unaccompanied. Now they who have not the Divine Spirit, they want the great Interpreter upon the Words of God; and therefore their Minds are left Unſatisfied and Unreſolved. Diſc. XIII.

Now to ſhut up all.

1ſt. I *Infer* then, that Atheiſm and Infidelity are the moſt Unaccountable, and Inexcuſable things in the World. There is nothing that God hath done more to any Intent and Purpoſe, than he hath done for ſecuring Men againſt Atheiſm, if born into the World; or Infidelity, if within the Pale of the Church. No Man is born to any Actual Knowledge in the World; but all habits and diſpoſitions are Acquiſitions, are our own productions, by the Grace of God, and under his Aſſiſtance. Now an Atheiſt ſhall be notoriouſly condemned, becauſe he hath not uſed his Reaſon, he hath not ſearched and examined. And the Infidel in the Pale of the Church, muſt needs be the moſt neglective Perſon in the World; for if a Man take up this Book of God, he may as eaſily Underſtand what may ſaveh is Soul, as any Man may Underſtand any Art by any Book whatſoever.

2*dly*. I adviſe in this caſe two Things.

1. I adviſe to Purity of Mind. Let Men Purify their Minds. For Wickedneſs doth diſable the Intellectuals: The naughty malignant Spirited Man hath no right Judgment nor Underſtanding: But *the Meek will be guide in the way*: and, if *you do theſe things, then ſhall you know the Doctrine*, Rom. 12. 2. *Not conform to the World, but transformed by renewal of the Mind, that you may prove what is good and acceptable.* Πονηρία. φθαρτικὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν. Pſ. 25, 9. Joh. 7. 17.

2*dly*. I adviſe you to *take up this Inſtrument* of God, the Bible; take it up and read it, *Tolle & lege*, and conſider, that you may become a Chriſtian. I ſhould

Vol. III. ſhould wonder if any one ſhould not become a Chriſtian, if he do take up this Book, and read, weigh, ponder, and conſider; at length you cannot but be ſatisfied and reſolved, that what is there propoſed is true. God hath not done it to no purpoſe, in commiting his Mind to writing, and ſending it into the World to teach Men. Two things will come at once, aſſurance that this is God's Inſtrument, and the Knowledge of the Materials of Divine Truth. The matter proves the Inſtrument to be Divine, and the Inſtrument contains the matter: A double benefit of ſingle Labour.

Laſtly, I ſuperadd, by way of Obſervation and Caution, four things.

1. That all that are ſerious in Religion, do agree in the main; ſo may hold Communion. If they have the Love of Truth in their Hearts: If they mean, by Religion, to prepare themſelves for Happineſs, all theſe Men do agree in Main and Principal things; therefore they may hold Communion; and if they may, they ought; if they ought and do not, they Sin. I except only four, Atheiſts, Hypocrites, Infidels, Profane. I would have all other Perſons own one another. For it is founded in Nature, that what is Principal, in no time whatſoever is to be prejudiced by an Acceſſary or Circumſtant. They that do agree in the great Things of Religion, they do agree in that that is Vital; therefore if they do not agree in other things of leſs Moment, hear what the Rule is, That Principals in no time whatſoever are to be prejudiced by an Acceſſary. This is true in every matter; therefore it muſt be concluded, that all that are ſerious in Religion, do agree in the main, and ſo may hold Communion.

2. This I adviſe, that you would not make a Mixture, a Jumble and a Confuſion in your Religion; of Certainties, and Uncertainties. Let all Uncer-

tains

tains lie by themſelves, in a Catalogue of Diſputables, matters of further enquiry: The Certains of Religion let ſettle into Conſtitution, and iſſue in Life and Practice. Diſc. XIII.

3. I adviſe you, upon no pretence whatſoever, admit any thing into any account of Religion, that is in it ſelf Abſurd, Irrational, and not Self-conſiſtent. That will weaken the Faith of the reſt, and will be a Matter of Argument to a Tempter.

4. Let there be nothing in Practice contrary to Principle. For a Man may work himſelf by uſe, cuſtom, and practice, into a contrary perſuaſion: He will form and faſhion himſelf into a Judgment, without any Ground. And, either not to know the neceſſary Rules of Life, or to vary from them in Practice, is moſt Unnatural, Violent and Monſtrous: And the Monſtrouſneſs of it appears in two things.

1. Becauſe it is a contradiction to our Faculties. *Eyes to ſee, and not perceive: Ears to hear, and not Underſtand: Hearts to conſider, and never the Wiſer.* 'Tis our care of our Souls, regard to God, firſt to be informed, then anſwerably Reformed; Obedience upon Knowledge, ought to be firſt Light in the Underſtanding, and then the Will follows. *Voluntas ducitur a Lumine Intellectus.*

2. It is a State Monſtrous; becauſe it is a State of Conviction and Condemnation. A Man is leſs than himſelf, where he doth not Underſtand: Where he doth not Underſtand, he is no Body at all. And if he do Underſtand, and do contrary, then he cannot be in Peace in himſelf: He cannot be at Peace within himſelf while he lives in diſobedience to known Truth. For Knowledge unfulfilled, is the moſt troubleſome Gueſt that can be entertained; a Goad in ones Side, a Mote in the Eye is not more troubleſome. He that affects to be an Atheiſt, is no longer at reſt than God will give him leave;

God

Vol. III. God will be there to Awe and Command at his Pleaſure, where he is refuſed as to Love and Affection. I have obſerved, that no Men ever ſtood more in fear of God, than thoſe that moſt deny and leaſt love him: And ſo it will be, if Men do affect to be Atheiſts, that ſo they may live exorbitantly and looſely; there is more of ſlaviſh fear of God in theſe Men an hundred Times, then there is in them that Fear, Obey and Love God.

DISCOURSE XIV.

The Venerable Nature, and Tranſcendant Benefit of Chriſtian Religion.

ROM. 1. 16.

I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth.

Diſc. XIV. HAving been lately upon a very ſignal and remarkable Argument; I thought is was beſt to purſue it: Having laid a Foundation, to build upon it.

I have many times endeavoured to declare againſt the Atheiſtical and Profane World: And I have laid down Arguments of Evidence, and Grounds of Aſſurance, beyond what any one can pretend in any other Myſtery in the World. I have inſiſted upon theſe five Heads of Arguments that give Aſſurance concerning the great Truths of Religion, Natural and Revealed.

The

Disc. XIV.

1. The Acknowledgment that these Truths have met with in all Ages of the World.

2. The Representation that these great Truths make of God to us, agreeable to what a Man is made of God, to know or think concerning God. The Proposals made by God unto Man, the Prohibitions upon him, and the Promises to him, all testifie of God, and declare worthily concerning God: Insomuch that when a Man is awake, it is the sense of his Soul; he will say, I know all these to be true.

3. The Ingenious Effect and Operation of these great Truths (Natural, and Revealed) upon the Minds and Spirits of Men, and the Influence they have upon their Lives and Conversation.

4. The suitableness of Natural Truth to the State God made Man to; as also the suitableness of Revealed Truth to Man in his lapsed State and Condition, in order to his Restitution and Recovery.

5. The Agency and Assistance of the Divine Spirit to promote these great Truths. All the Divine Truths, either Natural or Revealed in Scripture, have all these Evidences. Now if these great things in Religion, the main Truths of God, are of such certainty, then may we say with the Apostle, *I will never be ashamed of the Gospel of Christ*, &c.

So have I brought you into these Words, as a just Inference from what I had before delivered.

These Words are *First* considerable according to their Form.

Secondly, valuable according to their Matter.

First, According to their *Form*, they run in the Negative: *I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ.* Μείωσις, *minus dicitur, plus intelligitur.*

1. Here is less spoken, and more understood: and this is frequent in Scripture. It becomes us therefore

fore not to Overtalk our ſelves; for you ſee that Scripture, in things of great Moment, is content to ſpeak modeſtly. *I am not aſhamed*, &c. ſo *Heb.* 10. 38. *If any Man draw back, my Soul ſhall have no Pleaſure in him.* Is that the worſt? No ſurely, God will Loath him, and Abominate him; ſo here is leſs ſpoken, and more underſtood. Which we call *Meioſis.*

Affirmativa ligant ad ſemel, Negativa ad ſemper. Negativa pronunciant Negativa ſunt efficaciora.

2. Take this account: *Negatives* do denounce more ſtrongly; for Negatives do exclude all mixture of the contrary. This is a Rule, an Affirmative is ſatisfied in one ſingle poſitive Act; but a Negative doth always Oblige. Negatives are more effectual. But

3. *I am not aſhamed*, &c. Here is an intimation of Matter of ſhame within the compaſs of the Buſineſs: And that is intimated. For though the matter of the Goſpel is matter of great Goodneſs, yet there is matter of Shame; becauſe it comes in by the Fall, which was the occaſion of Man's Apoſtacy, was a ſhameful thing to Goſpel-Revelation. The Caſe of Goſpel-Revelation doth ſuppoſe Man's Degeneracy and Apoſtacy: For the Goſpel comes in for Recovery, for Pardon of Sin, and Reconciliation to God: So that the Goſpel is matter of Relief; yet it puts us in Mind of Apoſtacy, which is matter of ſhame. When we read the Goſpel, we have Reaſon to ſay, we *Remember our fault*: So here is the Language of one whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe Sin is covered: *I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt.* Cauſe of ſhame in the caſe, tho' cauſe of Glory and Triumph in the Grace of God.

Gen. 41. 9.

Secondly, Conſider the Words according to their *Matter*. So we obſerve three Things.

1. The *Perſon* ſpeaking, and in what *Capacity.*

2. *What* it is he ſaith; the Matter wherein he Gloried:

3. Upon

3. Upon what *account* he doth ſo expreſs himſelf. Diſc. XIV.

The *Perſon* ſpeaking was the Apoſtle: The *matter* he doth declare, is matter of Conſolation; and the *Aſſurance* he hath of true cauſe of Glorifying therein, becauſe this *Goſpel is the Power of God.*

The *Perſon. I am not aſhamed*, &c. that is, as a Priviledged Perſon: Or as a Believer.

1. We will conſider him in his *peculiar Capacity*, his proper Office and Employment. To him was committed the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel, 1 *Cor.* 9. 17. So, he *was not aſhamed*, &c. And indeed he had no Cauſe; for it is the Nobleſt Employment in the World, to be made uſe of by God in declaring Goſpel Matters, to be the Conveyor of the Reſolution of the Divine Will to Men, concerning their Recovery. I come upon God's Errand, and carry a Meſſage from God: And indeed this is the Honour that God hath beſtowed upon the Sons of Men, *Heb.* 2. 4, 5. For *unto the Angels hath he not put in ſubjection the World to come, whereof we ſpeak.* What is the *World to come* there? It is the Goſpel-State. God doth not tranſact inſtrumentally the Affairs of his Church, by the Miniſtry of Angels; but by Men, ſuch as our ſelves are, doth he bring to Knowledge the Myſteries of God, 2 *Cor.* 4. 7. To Men hath he given Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, and Teſtimonies by Signs and Miracles: And ſo St. *Paul* had no cauſe to be *aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt.*

But 2. In the common Capacity of a *Believer.* For it follows after: *It is the Power of God to Salvation, to every one that believeth: to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Greek.* That takes in all. So obſerve, the Subject recipient of the Grace of God, is all Mankind; but then the Qualification is, a *Believer.* I mean a Believer in Scripture Senſe: which I ſhall reſerve to tell you till I come to ſpeak

to *the Power of God to the Salvation of Believers.* So here the ſick Patient meets with his Phyſician; the Malady with its Remedy; the Wounded with its Cure; the Guilty with his Pardon: All which tends to Hearts-eaſe, compoſure and ſatisfaction of Mind. For what is wanting that is not come to Hand? So conſider him in his *proper Function*; or take him in the *common Capacity* of a Believer; the Goſpel, to every one that receives it, is matter of Glory, Triumph, Hearts-eaſe, and Satisfaction.

I am not aſhamed of the Goſpel of Chriſt: for it is the Power of God to Salvation, &c. *The Power of God.*] You muſt not underſtand Power as limited to One Perfection: For there are Three eminent Perfections in the Divine Nature: Power, Wiſdom, and Goodneſs. So that you muſt not underſtand Power here ſtrictly, to exclude other Divine Perfections. For other where he ſaith, *Chriſt the Power of God, and the Wiſdom of God*, 1 *Cor.* 1. 24. But it is ſaid to be Power, to intimate eminently the Sufficiency of Grace. It is called Power, to denote the Efficiency of God's Grace in Salvation. Now to advance this Grace, and raiſe our Apprehenſions of it, I proceed in this Method.

I. To declare the Excellency of it from the *Author.*

II. We will conſider what it is *in it ſelf.*

III. How far forth it is *Beneficial to us.*

I. The *Author*; that is God. And God diſcovers in it the Greatneſs of his Power; the Infiniteneſs of his Wiſdom; and it is the Fruit and Effect of abundant Goodneſs.

1. The

Disc. XIV.

1. The Greatness of his *Power*. Great are the Works of Creation and Providence: Yet if it be lawful to compare, or put in competition, the Work of Restoring a peccant and Delinquent Creature, hath the advantage of the Work of Creation and Providence: For a Privation is always further off from a Principle of Life, than a meer Negation: For a Privation is a Malignant Negation. Now where there was a Perfection before, and lost, that is a Privation. There is bringing a Non-entity to an Entity, as in all Generation and Creation: But to Recover from a Privation, to a Position, this transcends all ordinary Power.

Privatio est negatio malignans. A privatione ad Habitum non est regressus. A non esse, ad esse, datur progressus.

2. It is the Effect of his Infinite *Wisdom*. Though the account of Christ's Death be to *the Jews a Stumbling-block, and to the Grecks Foolishness*; yet to them that are led unto Participation of it, it is the *manifold Wisdom of God*. *Manifold*: Why? Because Man's Malady is desperate upon several accounts. Our Malady, the Evil of Sin, it is the Effect of Madness and Folly; and is that that makes us, through Faultiness, liable and obnoxious: It mars our Principles, depraves our Dispositions, and brings us into Slavery and Bondage. Now this needed manifold Wisdom in God; because it did comprehend in it several Malignities. Accordingly God hath declared, 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. That *Christ* (who is the Matter and Substance of the Gospel) *is made to us Wisdom*, against the Folly of Sin; *Righteousness*, against the Guilt of Sin; *Sanctification*, because of our depraved malign Disposition; and *Redemption*, because we have brought our selves into Bondage, as also under the Tyranny of evil Habits.

3. It is the Fruit of the abundant Goodness of God. Now that it is the Effect of God's Goodness, nothing more clear in Reason; nothing more plainly said in Scripture. Nothing

more clear in Reaſon, conſidering that God is the firſt and chiefeſt Good: And then alſo conſidering the Relation God ſtands in to his Creatures, which is the Relation of a Father. Earthly Parents reſemble it. Therefore, whatſoever of Good or Excellency you find here below, you have Reaſon to attribute the ſame in a tranſcendant manner to the firſt and chiefeſt Good. Therefore, that God doth afford us this Supply, it is matter of fair Belief, if we conſider God as in himſelf, or as Related to his Creatures. And then its plain in Scripture: For God *ſent his only begotten Son into the World, that the World through him ſhould have Life.* This is very remarkable throughout the Holy Scripture, that at ſeveral inſtances of time, when God was minded to bleſs the World or ſome particular Men in it; He did then make a further diſcovery of his Son, than what he hath done before: witneſs all the intermediate exhibitions of him, between the firſt Promiſe, *The Seed of the Woman breaking the Serpents Head*; and the laſt, *The Son of God manifeſt, to undo the Works of the Devil.* Whenever God had a Mind to bleſs the World, or to gratifie any particular Perſon in it, he then declared himſelf in ſomething concerning his Son. This is a ſufficient Argument, that the Grace of the Goſpel it was in Love and Good-will; and the effect of his Kindneſs, and the Fruit of his abundant Goodneſs. But further it muſt be attributed to the Goodneſs of God upon theſe accounts.

Joh. 3. 17.

Gen. 3. 15. 1 Joh. 3. 8.

1. It was that which we cannot ſay he was at all *Bound* to do.

2. It was that that no Power could *Conſtrain* him to do.

3. It was that that to himſelf he could make no *Gain*: For the Righteouſneſs of Man is no profit to God.

4. God

4. God put it upon him to *Suffer* and endure hard Measure to bring it about, who was neareſt and deareſt to him, and leaſt of all deſerved to Suffer. D *Sic.* XIV.

5. We may conceive, as it provoked the Apoſtate Spirits to Envy Man; ſo alſo to Malign God, they not being ſo well provided for, for ought we know. Take theſe five conſiderations, and it will appear, that this Salvation is the Effect of the Love of God.

II. and III. I now proceed to the other two conſiderations that do recommend to us the Grace of the Goſpel; to wit, the conſideration of what it is *in it ſelf*; and how *Beneficial* to us: And I put theſe two together.

1. It is rare and excellent *matter of Knowledge*, matter of admirable Speculation.

2. It is a *Vital Principle.*

1. Rare and Excellent *matter of Knowledge*, matter of admirable Speculation, the excellenteſt matter of Contemplation in the World. This would take with a Philoſopher: Yea this takes with all Perſons whatſoever. A Plot well contrived, bravely acted, handſomely managed and carried on. Now here is the Revocation of that that was the contrivance of Hell: For the Serpent, as the Devils Inſtrument, did Plot to bring Man into the condemnation of the Devil. Now here is a Revocation of that proud inſolent, ſaucy, preſumptuous, Act of Man, that bold Act of Uſurpation upon God: I cannot call it by Names bad enough, I mean the diſloyalty and Affectation of our firſt Parents, entering into a Confederacy with an Apoſtate Creature; and that with a deſign upon God himſelf, to *be like God.* Now here is a Revocation of this full Submiſſion, by the intire Self-reſignation of our Lord and Saviour. The former was an act of the greateſt Diſloyalty that a Creature could do againſt the

Majeſty of God. The latter, the Submiſſion of our Saviour reſigning up his Will; an Act of juſtifiing God's Right and Authority. This is rare matter of Contemplation, to conſider and compare theſe together: Here is matter for a Man to employ and exerciſe his thoughts; to conſider, as *by one Man condemnation*, ſo *by another Man juſtification*. This is that that will magnifie the Divine Goodneſs, Patience and Commiſeration. This ſhould teach us to imitate our Saviour: For that is the true way of Reconciliation, by returning to our own place of ſubmiſſion and intire Self-reſignation, into a Creature-State.

Rom. 5. 18.

Again, They that are Military, how are they pleaſed to hear of a Fight bravely managed! Why, here is the greateſt Victory that ever was in the World: The Victory of our Lord and Saviour, the Head of the Church, over the Devil, Sin, and the World: Not by Arms, but by the Spirit of God.

Again, A Prince and a Saviour raiſed up by God and ſent into the World; not to make Havock and Spoil, not to ruine and deſtroy, as great Warriours have done. Not as in the 2. *Sam.* 12. 31. *To put People under Saws and Harrows of Iron, and make them paſs through Brick-Kilns*: A thing intolerable to behold, dreadful to read of. In this impotent incompetent World, the great Warriours are upon Record for ſuch Matters, that I dare not undertake to juſtifie: And yet this is called *Noble*. But now ſee what it was that *this* Prince and Saviour that God hath raiſed up; ſee what he doth: *Not deſtroy Men's lives, but ſave them*; a *Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remiſſion of Sins*. A *Prince and a Saviour indeed*, a princely Saviour: He *came to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt*. This is a ſight for Angels: this is that the *Angels deſire to look* downward by the Church, to underſtand; and we,

Lu. 9. 56. & 5. 31. Matt. 18. 11. Eph. 3. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 21.

Sorry

Sorry Creatures, who are concerned in it, we neg- Diſc. XIV.
lect it. This is the firſt; this is rare *matter of Contemplation.* But

2. It is not only admirable matter of Knowledge, but alſo it is a *Vital Principle*; not of Natural Life, but of Divine: and that upon Two Accounts.

Firſt, As *Satisfying* the *Reaſon* of our Minds.

Secondly, As Being as a *Biaſs* upon our Spirits.

Firſt, It is in the firſt Place, a Vital Principle; as *Satisfying* the *Reaſon* of our Minds, by removal of fear and doubts; ſo ſettling us at Reſt and Peace, and Creating within our ſelves Quietneſs, compoſure and ſettlement: As hereby ſeeing and knowing that we are out of all danger and fear, notwithſtanding we have given God offence. Now that this is Vital, I refer my ſelf to that that is commonly acknowledged, *To live, is to be well:* For a Man to be at Hearts-eaſe, Peace and Quietneſs within himſelf. A Man that hath been Arraigned, and condemned, he is alive till he be executed: But his Life is worſe than Death. *To live, is to be well.* Now for a Man to be out of fear and danger from God, whom he hath offended; this is a Vital Principle: And a Man is ſure, that in and through Chriſt, upon his Repentance, he ſhall be Pardoned: This is Goſpel-Knowledge. And in intellectual Natures a Principle of Knowledge, as to the Underſtanding, is as well a Vital Principle, as an Habitual Diſpoſition is to the Will. Now what is more ſatisfactory to the Reaſon of our Minds, or tends more to the Peace of our Conſciences, than to be aſſured in a matter of ſo great Importance to us, as to ſee and Underſtand that God, to whom we are ſo liable and obnoxious, by Tranſgreſſion and Sin, not only is in his own Nature, the moſt lovely, placable and reconcileable Being; but in the Grace of the Goſpel, he is abſolutely reſolved and engaged by

Vivere eſt bene Valere.

his own Voluntary Declaration and Promiſe, to Pardon Sin, in and through Chriſt, to all who Repent and Believe the Goſpel. And this, and nothing leſs than this, is the matter of the Goſpel. This is that that is meant by the Scripture, That *we are accepted in and through Chriſt*; this is the true Explication; God in and through Chriſt, will Pardon Sin to all that leave off to Sin, and aſk him forgiveneſs, and return to Duty. This is the true Explication of *Juſtification by imputed Righteouſneſs*: And whatſoever is beyond this, is but imaginary, and will deceive any Man. That God hath declared himſelf, in and through Chriſt, for the Acceptance of Sinnners: That he will accept of their honeſt Meaning and good Endeavours, though they are imperfect; and will not bear a ſtrict examination in reſpect of Juſtice: He will accept us, if we honeſtly intend, though in act we are imperfect and fall ſhort.

Theſe things are greatly for our ſatisfaction; for I tell you a Man lives more by ſatisfaction of Mind than by Meat and Drink. I therefore may with great Reaſon call the Doctrine of the Goſpel, a Vital Principle, becauſe it gives ſatisfaction to the Reaſon of Man's Mind. Now ſee how it gives ſatisfaction.

1. Through the *Revelation* of the Goſpel, that God will pardon Sin, in and through Chriſt, to all that Repent, leave off to Sin, aſk him forgiveneſs, and return to Duty: That he will accept our honeſt Meaning, and true Endeavours, though in act we be ſhort and imperfect. In the firſt place we are ſure of God; and to God only are we obnoxious.

2. We know his *Terms*, and beyond theſe Terms he will not Require; and further, he will not be ſo ſevere to examine; ſo we know the worſt.

3. Theſe

2. Theſe Terms are fair and *equal* in themſelves, and fit to ſtand: For, is it not fit that an Offender ſhould do what is in him, to undo what he hath unduly done? and what elſe is required, but *Repentance from dead Works; and faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*? Are not theſe fit to ſtand? Is it not fit that I, being a Creature, ſhould undo that that I have unduly done? Disc. XIV. Act. 20. 21.

4. They are not only fit and juſt, but *Good for us*. For it is impoſſible for a Man to be happy, unleſs Reconciled, in his Nature, Mind, and Will, to God, Goodneſs and Truth. I cannot be happy if under the Power of Luſt: I cannot be Happy unleſs diſcharged from Naughtineſs of Spirit. I cannot be happy by God in a way of Oppoſition to God, but by ſubmiſſion, and ſubordination, and by being in Nature, Mind, and Will Reconciled to him.

5. Theſe Terms are made *poſſible* through the Grace of God, and the aſſiſtance of the Divine Spirit; ſo that we have little more to do, but to deſire and pray, that they may be verified, fulfilled and accompliſhed in us.

Thus it is a Vital Principle, as ſatisfiing the Reaſon of our Minds: Such is the Grace of the Goſpel, ſuch the Contents thereof, that they tend wholly to the ſatisfiing the Mind of Man, if he will uſe his Reaſon. The Sum and Subſtance of the Goſpel is comprehended in two things. *Repentance from dead Works*, and *Faith in our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*. And it is not poſſible from any Power whatſoever, that a Man be made Happy any other ways than thus; if he hath done amiſs, that he do (as far as in him lies) undo it again, and go to God in and through Chriſt, for Pardon and forgiveneſs. To believe, it is firſt requiſite that there be an internal diſpoſition and preparation of the ſubject, as well as a Divine Promiſe to build upon: A Man is not in Capacity of a Vital Act of Faith, if he do not Repent, and condemn himſelf for

Disc. XIV. Sin. These go together, and encourage each other: In as much as no Man Repents, who doth not believe; nor can any Man Believe who doth not Repent. 'Tis a fair matter of belief, Pardon of Sin to them who Repent: And Sin not Pardonable to Impenitents; so that our Satisfaction and Reformation go together, strengthen and enliven each other. Now if any Man tell me here of *Judas* his Repentance. I Answer, I am not to call *Judas*'s a Genuine, Ingenious, Evangelical Repentance, but it was a Male-content and Desperateness arising from horrid Guilt, and a havocked Conscience. But the Grace of the Gospel gives us this advantage; It doth encourage our Faith, and leads us to Repentance; because if we do Repent, it is a matter fairly credible, that Divine Goodness will Pardon: And then whosoever doth Believe, and cast himself upon the Goodness of God declared in Christ, undoubtedly he sees the ugly Nature, and deadly Consequences of Sin; and doth disentagle himself from it, and engage himself never to do the like. But

Secondly, The Grace of the Gospel is not only a vital Principle, as it is *Satisfactory* to the *Reason* of our Minds, but also as being a *Byass upon our Spirits*; an habitual Disposition and Temper, that doth encline us right toward our main and principal Object; that is, God; and freely carries us out in ways of Goodness, Righteousness and Truth. God is especially known to us by Righteousness and Holiness: And if we be like God, we must be so too. And then we Harmonize with God, when we are in Reconciliation with Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth. The Matter of the Gospel, when received, is an internal Disposition and Byass upon the Mind of Man: It dyes and colours a Man's Soul, so as to settle a Temper and Constitution; and in this way it is restorative to his Nature.

This

This is a true Rule: that which the Original of our Being hath made us able to do, by giving us Powers and Faculties; that we do easily, and with content, after we have acquired a Habit, and are Receivers of God's Grace. Through the Assistance of that Divine Grace, we are not only able, but freely willing; and so go pleasurably on in the ways of Religion and Conscience. For God perswades us: And *the Law of the Spirit of Life which is in Christ Jesus, frees us from the Law of Sin and Death.* The Christian Religion doth not only controul external exorbitant Acts, which are visible to By-standers; but it doth regulate the Inclinations, the inward Frame and Temper of the Mind: It doth govern the first Motions, and the Elicite Acts that are performed within a Man's self. As *Christ* said to *God*; *Not my Will, but thine be done*: So we, through participation of Christ, are lead into a temper of Submission and Self-denyal, in respect of God; and as to Others, a temper of Meekness, Patience, Gentleness, and a Readiness to close with all Advantages to gratifie and do good. By our *Faith we have Victory over the World.* What is the meaning of that? By Faith we see and apprehend things that are not visible to Humane Reason, to Men that are of Carnal Spirits: But we see things of high Importance; and we are so well resolved of them, that we make Faith the governing Principle of our Lives; we will not lose our Share and Interest in them, for things of a petty Concernment. *By Faith we overcome the World.* Faith makes things that are future as of present Existence: And by Faith we see these to be of ten thousand times more value than the things of this World. *By Faith we overcome the World*: By this Eye of Faith, Things that are great and powerful in the World, are seen through, and prove not effectual to drive a Man away from his true Concernment.

Disc. XIV.

Rom. 8. 2.

Luk. 22. 42

Hence

Hence it comes to paſs, that theſe Men are Men of other Lives than the Men of this World, as is truly repreſented in the 5*th* Chapter of the Book of *Wiſdom*. *This was he whom we had ſometimes in deriſion, and a Proverb of Reproach. We Fools accounted his Life Madneſs, and his End to be without Honour. How is he numbred among the Children of God, and his Lot is among the Saints?* The *Spirit* of the Goſpel entring, we are transformed into another Nature, Life and Temper. But this is the leaſt I can ſay of the Grace of the Goſpel. I have further to ſay; 1 Cor. 2. 9. which I am ſure you cannot hear, nor I ſpeak: *It doth not now appear*, neither can we bear the thought of *what we ſhall be* when *God ſhall be all in all*, and all Enmity ſhall be ſubdued. If you are able to bear it, think of this one thing; What we may come to at laſt, by a true Improvement and right Uſe of our Natural Powers and Faculties, and by the ordinary Aſſiſtance of God. This you may expect, that *Adam*, as God made him, might have arrived to, and might have come to, if he had not voluntarily tranſgreſſed. But then, farther, I propoſe to you what we may aſcend to by being endued with Power from above; which *Adam* could not pretend to. But now I have told you more than I my ſelf can comprehend; but yet this we have, 1 *Cor.* 15. *Chap.* from the 16*th Verſe* to the end of the *Chapter*: Where you may ſee, that now, through the Grace of the Goſpel, we have very many high and great Priviledges. But I am now paſſed to thoſe things that are within the Confines of the State of Glory.

And ſo much may ſuffice for Account of this. The Apoſtle ſpeaks very moderately, when he ſaith, *He was not aſhamed of the Goſpel*: He had no Reaſon ſo to be, becauſe the Grace of the Goſpel is, matter of rare and excellent Contemplation; and is alſo a Vital Principle.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XV.

The Venerable Nature, and Transcendant Benefit of Christian Religion.

ROM. I. 16.

I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ: for it is the Power of God to Salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Disc. XV.

I Have endeavoured to recommend to you the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, from these three Heads of Argument.

1. from its *Author*, *God* himself. It is the Effect of his infinite Wisdom and Knowledge, and the Fruit of his abundant Goodness, Benignity and Compassion.

2. From the *Qualities* of the Doctrine of the Gospel, in it self considered.

3. From its *Usefulness to us*. Of these I have spoken.

Now I proceed to the Subject recipient, the Receiver of this great Benefit; *The Power of God to Salvation, to every one that believes.*

Say what you will of the Grace of of the Gospel, represent it as the Effect of infinite Wisdom, and as the Fruit of abundant Goodness of God; yet if there be an uncapable Recipient, there is no Effect attained.

The

The Subject of this Grace of the Goſpel, is every one that *Believes.* And indeed this is a point of the moſt ſerious conſideration in all the World; for this intimates our Charge. All hitherto is done without our Thought; but now here is our Charge: If we have any care of our Souls Safety, we will not fall ſhort of the Salvation which God hath appointed, and our Saviour hath wrought, through a failure, in putting forth an Act, which fairly we may, through Divine Direction, Conduct, and Guidance.

But to give you an Explication of this Belief. This *Believing* muſt be taken in a very comprehenſive Senſe. The Scripture doth ſuppoſe, that every one that doth not give himſelf up to the Doctrine of Chriſt, and the Doctrine of the Goſpel, the Scripture doth ſuppoſe he doth not believe it. And the Scripture doth ſuppoſe, if any one believes the Doctrine of the Goſpel, he gives himſelf to be guided by it, *John* 3. 36. *He that believeth on the Son of God hath everlaſting Life.* To believe, is to know and obey. It is no Scripture-Faith, that doth not carry along with it anſwerable Practice. Anſwerable to this you have it in many places called, *The Obedience of Faith.* He doth not really believe, who doth not do accordingly. We do not by any breach of Charity, if any one lives in the breach of our Saviour's Commands, to call him an Unbeliever: The Scripture calls believing in Chriſt, *Receiving him*, *John* 1. 12. *But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his Name.* If you take him, you muſt take him as he is; as a King, to rule and govern you; as a Prophet, to inſtruct you; as a Saviour, to ſave you. How inconſiſtent is it, for any Man to think that he muſt go to God in and through Chriſt, and yet that he may live as he liſt? In Religion

Ἀπειθοῦντες. ἀπιστοῦντες.
Joh. 3. 36. ὁ πιστεύων ὁ ἀπειθῶν.
Rom. 1. 5. Rom. 16. 26.

ligion, let not one thing rise up against another. The Reason why we should take in all collateral Acts, though the Scripture expresseth but one; is plain from that Scripture, *Acts* 5. 31. *A Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance and Remission of Sins.* We all acknowledge that it is Faith that is immediate to Remission of Sins; and you have here a signal Place of Scripture, and Faith is omitted, and Repentance put in; and Repentance doth include Faith; for Repentance were desperate, if no Hope and without Faith. This shews, that God means they should all go together; and that Scripture intends all, though it speak but of one. In all other cases, we do according as we believe; why should it not be here also? Dist. XV.

And this for Explication of this Belief. The Subject Recipient of this Great Grace, is every one that *Believeth*: And for the Amplification of the Object, the Apostle descends to particulars, *To the Jew first, and also to the Greek.* By the *Jew*, you all know is meant the peculiar chosen People of God: By the *Greek* here, you are to Understand the residue of Mankind; *Jew* and *Greek*, are as much as *Jew* and *Gentile.* So that here you may observe two things.

1. The *Order* of this Divine Dispensation.

2. The *Extent* of it: To the *Jew* first, and to all other People.

I will Gloss upon this in six particulars, and so pass it over.

1. I observe, that God did not first *desert* the *Jews*, but they did forsake their own Mercies. For it is said here, *to the Jew first*: And also the Apostle tells them, *Acts* 13. 46. *It was necessary that the Word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing you put it from you, and judge your selves unworthy of Everlasting Life, lo we turn to the Gentiles.* God is not wont lightly to begin, nor causelesly to desist. I give

All did, ἐλληνίζειν. *Maxima pars Orientis Graece loquebatur.* Beza. Ἕλληνες. *Unbelieving.* Ελληνισαι. *Believing* Gentiles.

give you this caution: Never upon any occaſion attribute to God the evil of Sin, and the evil of Puniſhment only in the ſecond Place: For the evil of Sin is purely our own; and the evil of Puniſhment, we are the cauſe of that too. Whatſoever Creature doth periſh, *his deſtruction is of himſelf.* It is of the Grace and Goodneſs of God, that he begins with any of his Creatures, and the ſame Goodneſs will carry him on, while the caſe remains compaſſionable: *to the Few firſt.*

Hoſ. 13. 9.

2. I obſerve that the *Few* hath no cauſe at all to be aggrieved or *Offended* at the *Gentiles* entertaining the Faith of the Goſpel, and receiving the Chriſtian Religion, which they refuſed; and that according to the tenour of the Goſpel; pretending Intereſt in God, and laying claim to the Promiſes: becauſe you ſee it is to the *Few firſt*, and *after* to the *Gentiles.*

3. I obſerve in the third place, that while the Truth of the Goſpel was under a darker Manifeſtation, it was alſo under a narrower Confinement; for the *Few* had it *firſt*; then the *Gentile* had it after.

Act. 14. 16, 17. Rom. 10. 14, 18.

4. It *Warrants* that I have to ſpeak, and all you have to believe. *To the Few firſt, and alſo to the Gentile.* The *Few* hath the Priority, but we are included, *Gal.* 3. 28. *There is neither Few nor Greek, for ye are all one in Chriſt Jeſus, Rom.* 2. 6*th.* to the 10*th.* This is the Grace of the Goſpel: No impediment to any Man's Faith; he is not prejudiced from his Relation, State, or Country. This is our Priviledge, that live in the latter Ages of the World.

Col. 3. 11. Act. 10. 35.

5. I obſerve hence the *Engagement* that is upon the *Gentiles* to God: For now the *Childrens Bread* is allowed *thoſe that were Dogs.* The *Gentiles* are allowed Childrens Bread: *To the Few firſt and alſo to the Gentile.*

Matt. 15. 26, 27.

6. Obſerve

6. Obſerve here the *Recollection* of all in one: We all agree in ſubſtance, though the Jew had the Priority. Diſc. XV.

Theſe are the Improvements that I make from theſe ſuperadded Words, *to the Jew firſt, and alſo to the Gentile.*

I will make two Obſervations from the whole; and then a uſe or two.

1. The firſt Obſervation is this: There is all the Reaſon in the World, that we ſhould *Acknowledge* God eminently, for his Grace and Godneſs in our Salvation, and have a juſt reſentment of it: For the Doctrine of the Goſpel *is the Power of God to the Salvation* of Man. What doth *Salvation* import? Salvation, from the firſt to the laſt, doth include ſeveral Progreſſions that are in the Paſſage from the Death of Sin and the Carnal Mind, unto the Spiritual State and Divine Life: Or there is a double Salvation, if you will diſtinguiſh, *the Salvation of Grace*, and the *Salvation of Glory*. The former is the Inchoation, the latter the Conſummation. While not the former, there is an impoſſiblity of the latter. For if here we are not Reconciled, we cannot be Happy by any Society, or Converſe whatſoever, if we our ſelves are in an Evil Spirit. They are mightily miſtaken, that diſtinguiſh this State and the Future *by Place only*: For the *main* Diſtinction is in State: Only they differ in Degree. If you could Imagine a Man that is Unregenerate, and in a Carnal Mind, and in love with Sin, in Heaven; place him where you will he cannot be Happy; becauſe he is not Naturalized to his Condition. The Doctrine of the Goſpel is no Invention of Humane Reaſon: Man did not prevent God in it, by any thought of it before hand, or any deſire: Man merited it not at God's Hands, neither hath after Recompenſed it. Only the neceſſity of Man's State required it, and God's Goodneſs afforded

forded it. 'Tis perſwaſive and affecting in the ſtrongeſt way of Motive and Argument, which are proper ways of acting in the Intellectual World: The excellency of Infinite Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs is diſplayed in it; and God by it, works powerfully in us, and upon us; and we find our ſelves ſtrongly wrought on: And this commanding in the higheſt way of Reaſon. No better way of arguing than by ſtrong Reaſon, and convincing Argument. And no ſuch conviction, no fuller ſatisfaction in any undertaking, than in the Buſineſs of Regeneration, and Converſion. And upon this account it is called the *Power of God to Salvation.* That is the firſt Obſervation: The Acknowledgment, and Thankfulneſs that is due to God: And this is worthy on our Part, and it is no more than a juſt, equal and fair Reſentment of what God hath done.

2. As *the Goſpel is the Power of God unto Salvation*; So it is ſuperadded in the Text, *To every one that believeth*: Hence I obſerve, that whereſoever the Grace of God is afforded to any Spiritual effect, there we our ſelves are alſo to act. Whereſoever, or in what Meaſure ſoever, God doth appear by his Grace, there is ſomething to be done in us, and by us. Let not us deceive our ſelves: Our actual Salvation doth ſuppoſe and depend upon ſome act of ours; for if there be Incrudelity in the caſe, the Grace of God hath ſuch a ſtop, as the Sun hath by the thick Body of the Earth. Our Salvation doth ſuppoſe a diſpoſition in us, and an act of our own: And really *no Man can be converted without his own Act, without his own conſent.* For to believe and Repent are our Vital Acts. But if any one ſay to me, hereby you diſparage God's Grace, and make it leſs: *Obj.*

I anſwer, not at all; this makes us not leſs beholden to God; for God gives us whatſoever is good. The Scripture tells us, that the Wiſdom was the Wiſdom of *Solomon*: And the Scripture ſaith, God put it into his *Anſw.*

Heart

Heart, 1 *Kings* 10. 24. *David* gives God thanks that it was in their Hearts to offer willingly, 1. *Chron.* 29. 13, 14. There is an abſolute neceſſity in the thing, that the ſecond cauſe concur as a Vital Principle, where the firſt cauſe is as a pure Efficient. It doth not leſs make us depend upon God: Becauſe it is he alſo that gives us the Power, whereby we are able. He cannot Repent in us, nor believe in us: But he gives us Ability. He may co-operate as a pure Efficient; but he cannot co-operate as a Vital Cauſe. Some Men are of the thought, that Man's converſion muſt be brought about as St. *Pauls* was; and then they think they cannot but Repent and Believe. But let me tell you, there is no expecting of any ſuch Application to Men now, becauſe *the Goſpel is the Power of God to Salvation.* St. *Paul* tells the *Galatians*, *Gal.* 3 1. *That before their Eyes, Jeſus Chriſt had been evidently ſet forth Crucified* and ſlain *among them.* You all know that our Saviour was Crucified at *Jeruſalem*, not in *Galatia*; and yet the Apoſtle ſays, that *before their Eyes, he had been evidently ſet forth Crucified* and ſlain. Why? Becauſe they had had a Rational account, and explication of the true Notion, and Intention of the Death of Chriſt. The buſineſs of Chriſt's Death was ſo declared, that they might Underſtand it twenty times better, than they which had ocular inſpection. They to whom God doth apply in a Rational way, Illuminating their Underſtanding, ſhewing them the Reaſon of things; theſe are more effectually and powerfully wrought upon, than thoſe to whom things are repreſented only by their ſenſes: For I am a thouſand times more confident of my Reaſon than of any Senſe. We have a full explication of the Reaſon of our Saviour's coming, and a true Notion of his Death; and this is much more than the appearance that was made to *Saul*, as he was Travelling. Have therefore no ſuch expectation, that

Diſc. XV.

Vol. III. Converſion is to be brought about in ſuch a way; for this way that we have now, is more Powerful. If we be not convinced in this great matter that the Goſpel doth declare; we ſhould not be affected if Chriſt did appear to us, as he did to St. *Paul*; For this is tranſcendant, as being ſatisfaction to our Reaſons and Underſtandings. And theſe are my two Obſervations; that there is due to God thankful *Acknowledgment*; and that it becomes us to have deep Reſentment of it. We having diſabled our Faculties, God hath employed his own Wiſdom and Goodneſs to find out a way; and he hath declared the Doctrine of the Goſpel, *the Power of God to Salvation*: And this proves ſhort and ineffectual, unleſs it meets with Faith in us; you are to underſtand God doth not do all without you; *the Goſpel is the Power of God to Salvation*, but it *is to them that believe.*

And thus have I run over the Doctrinal Part; alſo have made explication of the ſeveral Terms, and ſuggeſted to you the ſeveral Emphaſis's that are in the Words: The *Applicatory* part remains; to which I now betake my ſelf.

It hath been made appear to you, that the Doctrine of the Goſpel, as to its own Efficiency, and alſo God's Intention, is effectual to bring Men to Salvation.

I. Then are we to *Acquaint* our ſelves thoroughly with the *Tenour* of the Goſpel; and conſider well the circumſtances which make up our caſe: Particularly theſe three; our contracted Impotency by our Fall: The neceſſity of Recovery and Reſtauration, or elſe Ruin to Eternity: The Efficacy and Freeneſs of the Grace of God to converſion: So we may reſolve our Minds, tho' our caſe be very forlorn, yet nothing is deſperate, nothing is impoſſible: But our Recovery, through the Grace of God, is fair and eaſie. And thus being prepared by ſuch knowledge,

II. In

Diſc. XV.

II. In the ſecond place, *purſue the Intent* of the Goſpel, in your own Spirit, and in Conjunction with your ſelves, and others alſo, by free Communication in converſe. The only way to do a Man's ſelf good Effectually, in Intellectuals, and Spirituals; is to do good to others in converſe, and carry others on with us. It is here, as with the Widow's Oil, the more you ſpend, the more you have: You encreaſe by Expence. *Be ready to render a Reaſon of the Hope that is in you.* This is the higheſt purpoſe of all our meeting together, to give every Man Satisfaction: And it is the great courteſie we can do to one another, freely to tell what cauſe we have to believe ſuch or ſuch a thing: And certainly we do our ſelves the greateſt Good, when we do good to others. To promote this Motion: There is nothing is more Unnatural, or of greater Deformity in the whole World, than that an Intelligent Agent ſhould have the Reaſon of Things in his Mind, and that it ſhould not give Law and Rule in Temper, Life, and Action: The firſt thing in Religion is this, to Teach a Man's own Mind; to look to the Grounds and Aſſurances a Man hath for his perſwaſion: And then it is wonderful ſtrange and monſtrous, if it ſhould not have ſuch Influence upon a Man, as to eſtabliſh a Frame and Temper, and be a Law and Rule to Life and Practice. The Reaſon of the thing is as much our Rule as ſenſe is to ſenſitives, or the Nature of the things to inanimates. Now you would think it horrid and prodigious, for theſe things not to follow the guidance of their Natures: But it is much more horrid in Rationals, not to comply with the Principles of Reaſon and Underſtanding; becauſe we were made more ſufficient for our Connatural Acts, than either Senſitives or Inanimates. Now the Intention of the Goſpel being to us the greateſt good; and it being connatural to us to run out upon Inquiry;

1 Pet. 3. 15.

Contra Ordinem Rationis in Spiritualibus.
Contra Ductum Naturæ in ſenſualibus.
Contra Impetum Naturæ in Inanimatis.

who will ſhew us any good? It is great matter of wonder, that it ſhould take ſo little Effect. It muſt
Pſ. 4. 6. be either Unbelief or groſs Self-neglect, careleſs Inadvertency, that makes Men continue in a State of Evil and Sin, ſince the intent of the Goſpel is ſo much for our advantage. I pray conſider. 1*ſt.* The great *Encouragements* that God hath given to Sinners to return; the many Promiſes that he hath made to receive them, Enable and Reward them; and that Pathetical Invitation of our Lord and Saviour, and how he did Mourn over *Jeruſalem.* 2*dly.* The *Diſcovery* that hath been made by Natural Light, or Revealed in Scripture, of a future Exiſtence; Firſt by Natural Light; then by the Goſpel our Saviour *hath brought Life and Immortality to*
2 Tim. 1. 10. *Light.* Then, 3*dly.* No ſuch *Motives* and Arguments for any things in the whole World as there are for leaving off Sin, and Reconciliation to Righteouſneſs. And, *Laſtly.* The great *Aſſiſtances* of the Divine Spirit. Conſider theſe, and ſee if we are not greatly to be blamed for Neglecting our own Souls.

Again, Conſider there is ſo much of Reaſon for it on Man's Part, that it is not only Juſt and Fit in it ſelf, but good for us, that we ſhould Repent from all dead Works, and believe in the Lord Jeſus. Firſt, *Juſt*, and *Fit*: For is it reaſonable, for any one by an after Act, to defend an Act of Inſolence againſt his Soveraign? And if a Man do commit a Sin, if he do not revoke it by Repentance, he virtually lives in it. Secondly, It is *Good for us*: For without it there is Self condemnation, and Incapacity of Happineſs. For a Man under guilt of Sin, is either Seared, or elſe Tormented. Self-condemnation I take to be the Life of Hell, the worſt Ingredient in Hell: And a Man muſt be Self-condemned if once he contract Guilt, unleſs he revoke it again by Repentance. For he that doth Repent, is of this Mind, that he would

would not do the thing if it were to do again. Dſc. XVI
And then there is an incapacity of Happineſs without Repentance: For put a Man into a Holy place he cannot be happy; unleſs reſtored to Innocence by Repentance, and Renewed in Part. And *Laſtly*, it is under the Grace of God *poſſible*, and not only poſſible, but of *Eaſy* and fair performance; and in this way, the Mind of Man hath aſſurance and ſatisfaction: For thus it is a compaſſionable Caſe; the caſe of a Sinner that Repents of and revokes what he hath done amiſs, is compaſſionable; becauſe he was never but Finite and Fallible. And if the caſe of a Sinner be compaſſionable, we need not fear but the firſt and chiefeſt Goodneſs will Commiſerate, and ſave to the uttermoſt, to the extent of the diſpoſition in the Subject. On the other ſide, we cannot conceive how contumacious Impenitent Sinners can be Pardoned; ſince it is in it ſelf good and worthy of God, either conſidered abſolutely as in himſelf, as the firſt and chiefeſt Good; or relatively, as Governour of the World; to controul, and challenge wilful and pertinacious Tranſgreſſors. Such is the Chriſtian Religion, in reſpect of its Nature and quality; in reſpect of all the Principles of it; all the Performances that it puts Men upon; ſo Sovereign to our Natures; ſo ſatisfactory to the Reaſon of our Minds, and quiet of our Judgments and Conſciences; ſo for Recovery and Reſtauration, that no Man that is intelligent, and doth ſeriouſly conſider, would chooſe to have this Obligation to Religion either releaſed, or cancelled, or diſcharged. To *conclude*. How unaccountable then, and inexcuſeable are they that *have turned the* Doctrine of the *Grace of God into Laſciviouſneſs*, and *have made void the Law through Faith*, have given ſuch an Explication of the Grace of the Goſpel, as to ſet Men at liberty as to Morals, that is, to make void the Law through Faith. There Jud. 4. Rom. 3. 31.

is a great miſtake among us. Some think that the Helliſh State is the *ſole* Product of God's Power; and do think that God uſeth his Creatures as he will. No, certainly the ways of God are the moſt accountable of any Tranſactions in the World, to Reaſon and Rules of Righteouſneſs. To think otherwiſe, is to think injuriouſly of God, and diſhonourably of him. Here is the truth of the caſe: Miſery ariſeth out of our ſelves, and hath the ſame Foundation that Iniquity hath. Hell for the main of it, is that the Sinner is in a ſelf-condemned State, without relief; and the worſt of God is his juſt refuſal of a Sinner, that would not be reclaimed. Self-condemnation from the Guilt of a Man's Conſcience, that is not removed by Repentance; and God's refuſal, becauſe the Sinner would not come within the Latitude of a compaſſionable caſe.

DISCOURSE XVI.

The abſolute Neceſſity of Religious Obedience, and unavoidable Perdition of the Diſobedient.

ROM. 1. 17, 18.

For therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed from Faith to Faith; as it is written, the Juſt ſhall live by Faith.

For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs, and Unrighteouſneſs of Men, that hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.

IN theſe Words the Apoſtle doth further confirm what he had declared in the foregoing Verſe; where he had told us, that the *Goſpel of Chriſt is the Power of God to Salvation.* Diſc. XVI.

For therein is the Righteouſneſs of God revealed (I would have you ſupply it) toward them that believe *from Faith to Faith, as it is written, the Juſt ſhall live by Faith.*

For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs.

Theſe two Verſes Contain all contraries: And Contraries are the beſt Comments one upon another. The *Righteouſneſs* of God revealed toward them that *believe*: The *wrath* of God revealed againſt *all Ungodlineſs*. That that is oppoſite to the Believer, is the Ungodly Man and diſobedient, and *holding*

Truth in Unrighteousness. So that the Apostle holds him to be an Unbeliever, let him profess what he will, who lives contrary to what he professes.

From these Two Verses we have these Propositions.

1. That God hath *Engaged* himself, resolved in himself, and declared to Man, so that he will not go back; that all they that do believe, believe and obey; God hath engaged himself to them all for Recovery, Life, and Salvation, and Restauration to their former condition and Happiness, to all that give themselves up to the Gospel, and live accordingly. And on the other side, which is a perfect Opposition, *The Wrath of God is declared* to all Men *that hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.*

2. Again, these Men that do Believe, and Obey in the sense of the Text, are *just Men*, and they have true and real Righteousness; that is *Evangelical Righteousness*: And these shall have eternal Life: And the Righteousness of these, through the candid construction of the Gospel, and gracious Interpretation of God, is Righteousness without spot or blemish: It is so through Divine Candour. God accepts it so, as loving Parents accept of the good disposition of their Children, though it is little that they do. These Men in the sense of the Scripture are *Just*: And
Is. 64. 6. their Righteousness is not *rotten Rags*, as is said of Ritual Observations in conjunction with Immorality: But is true and real Righteousness, without spot or blemish. There are two Degrees of Innocence: The *first* Degree is never to have Offended; so *Adam* before his fall, The *second* Degree is to have repented. The former doth belong to the whiteness of Snow: The last to the having our Garments washed *white in*
Rev. 7. 14. *the Blood of the Lamb.* Now we have not the first, but we may have the second: For then we may say, upon a Moral consideration, that the Sins that we have committed are as if they never were committed; when

when the Sinner hath repented, aſked God forgiveneſs; returned to Duty; and God hath pardoned him. Diſc. XVI.

On the clean contrary: God hath declared his Anger and Diſpleaſure againſt all Unbelievers and impenitent Sinners; pretenders to Faith, who do not in the Honeſty of their Hearts, give themſelves up to practice according to the Doctrine of the Goſpel. They are ſo far from being true Believers, that they offer violence to Truth, and in the ſenſe of the Scripture, are really Unbelievers. It is plain in the Text; for *Men are ſaid to Believe, as they Practice:* For notwithſtanding what a Man hath ſaid, we conclude he believes contrary, if he do not as he ſaith: And Unbelievers, and Diſobedient, are convertibly uſed in ſeveral Places in Scripture. The way to believe to Salvation, is ſuch a Faith, ſuch a receiving the Lord *Jeſus* by voluntary conſent of the Will, as to have regard to all his Precepts, and Obey them in the Practice of our lives: If we do not this, we are to be reckoned among the Unbelievers, and Ungodly. And this for a General account of theſe two Verſes; wherein you have three Oppoſitions which comment one upon another.

1. In Contradiſtinction to the *Righteouſneſs of God* in the 17th Verſe; you have the *Wrath of God* in the 18th Verſe.

2. To *Faith*, and *every one that believes*; you have in the 18th Verſe *Ungodly*, *Unrighteous*, and *a holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*. Wherefore the *Believer*, muſt not be a Man that is deſcribed by an Act of naked and ſingle Apprehenſion, but ſuch a Perſon as in State and Spirit, is ſeparate from Unrighteouſneſs, and Ungodlineſs; and no way guilty of *holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*. And then

3. Againſt things conſequent upon the Wrath of God, in the 18th Verſe, you have things conſequent upon the Goodneſs of God to Believers.

Now

Now for Particulars.

For therein is the Righteousness of God revealed, &c.

The *Righteousness of God.* I Understand this not so as it is every where meant, or most commonly meant. But considering the Opposition of the two Verses, *Righteousness of God* in the 17th Verse, and *Wrath of God* in the 18th Verse; as contrary Principles, producing contrary Effects. I therefore Understand by the *Righteousness of God* here, his Goodness, his Mercy, Compassion, Kindness, and Benignity, his equal consideration, and fairness toward Man, in his State of Guilt. That Disposition in God that moves him to forgive, to pity and compassionate Man in his Misery and in his ruined Estate, This I understand by *God's Righteousness* here: and so it is best distinguished from the *Wrath of God* in the 18th Verse; by which I Understand God's Displeasure upon Offence: And this concurs with that of the Apostle, *Rom.* 11. 22. *Behold therefore the Goodness and the severity of God.* The *Goodness* of God toward all those that Repent and Believe: The *Severity* of God toward those that are Contumacious and Impenitent. It is so understood in some other Scriptures, *Dan.* 9. 7, 9. *O Lord, Righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of Faces. To the Lord our God belong Mercies and Forgiveness, though we have rebelled against him.* So in the *Rom.* 3. 25. *to declare his Righteousness for remission of Sins through the forbearance of God.* If you will take Righteousness as strict Justice, it is but a small Principle for Remission of Sins: But you must take it for God's Goodness, Kindness, and Benignity. Such is the Tenour of the Gospel, that through *Jesus Christ*, there is declared, in the way of Faith and Obedience, that God is very willing of his Goodness, Clemency, and Benignity, to Pardon Sin to all such as Repent, Believe, and Obey.

From

From Faith to Faith.

That is in its ſeveral Degreees: From one Meaſure of Faith to another; that is, from Faith as a Grain of Muſtard Seed, to Faith as a Mountain: As the Pſalmiſt in *Pſalm* 84. 7. *They go from Strength to Strength.*

As it is written, the Juſt ſhall live by Faith.

Theſe Words you have four times in the Bible; and we have them in two different ſenſes: Conſiſtent, but different. We find it Originally, *Habakkuk* 2. 4. And you have it here in the Text: And you have it *Gal.* 3. 11. And you have it *Hebr.* 10*th* 38. In the Words you have Three Things.

1. A Man is Evangelically Righteous, in the way of Faith and Obedience, notwithſtanding Imperfections. Faith in the Lord Jeſus, purſued by Obedience, doth amount to real Righteouſneſs: And through the Grace of God in *Jeſus Chriſt* they are acccepted of God as ſuch. *Repentance from Dead Works, and Faith in the Lord Jeſus*, is the Tenour of the Goſpel-Covenant; The honeſt and ſincere Endeavours of thoſe that do believe, and embrace the Goſpel, are in Scripture called *Righteouſneſs, without ſpot or wrinkle*: And this is alſo the *fine Linen*, clean and white, which the Saints wear. There muſt be ſincere Obedience, although ſhort and Imperfect, which is accepted as full and perfect in and through Chriſt. This I take to be the true Explication of *imputed Righteouſneſs*, that God accepts of the ſincere Obedience of his Creatures; though it be ſhort and imperfect, yet if it be ſincere, in and through Chriſt, it is accepted as if full and perfect. *Juſtus ex fide.* Eph. 5. 27. Rev. 19. 8.

2. Such as I have now deſcribed, they ſhall *Live* in the ſenſe of the Evangeliſt: They *ſhall not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life*, *John* 3. 16. He that is Righteous, according to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, though imperfect and ſhort. If you conſider him accord- *Juſtus ex fide Vivit.*

according to the Doctrine of the Law; yet if he be a true Penitent, holds the Head, goes to God in and through Chriſt, and endeavours to be in the World as Chriſt was in the World; ſuch a Man is in the way of Eternal Life, and ſhall be Eternally ſaved.

Juſtus Vivet ex fide. 3. Such Perſons as theſe that have Faith and Confidence in God, and live in expectation from him and dependance upon him, they are *not in haſte*, but will ſtay God's leiſure. They wait upon God for the fulfilling of his Promiſes, and willingly ſtay God's time, though not in preſent Poſſeſſion they ſtay themſelves upon him.

The two former Propoſitions are the ſenſe, as the Words are quoted, *Rom.* 1. 17. *Gala.* 3. 11. The third as the Words are, *Hab.* 2. 4. *Heb.* 10. 38.

Further I Obſerve from theſe Words, *the juſt ſhall live by Faith*, being four times in the Scripture.

Firſt, That Men that have been inſpired, have thought it worthy of themſelves to *prove by Scripture*. Our Apoſtle, whom we look upon to be an extraordinary Perſon, yet he proves what he ſaith by Scripture, *as it is written*. Men inſpired prove by Scripture.

1. To declare the Endicter, Speaker, Writer, to be but the *Inſtrument*, The Inſpirer, the *Author*.

2. To ſhew the *Unity* of the Spirit: The ſame Spirit ſpake by *Moſes*, and the Prophets, and the Apoſtles.

3. To ſhew the conſiſtency of the ſame Spirit with *himſelf*. The ſame Truth for ſubſtance in ſeveral Times.

4. To ſecure us againſt *Impoſture*; and to Warrant us to examine what is ſaid in God's Name, or under pretence of his Commiſſion. To do as the *Bereans* did, *Acts* 17. 11. A ſure Word of Propheſie, 2. *Pet.* 1. 19. Our Faith is our peculiar Reſerve for God: God will not expoſe it to any invincible Temptation.

tation. There is in the Goſpel only *one great matter* Diſc. XVI.
of Faith, which God propoſes to us to believe: The Grace of God in Chriſt, Pardon of Sin in his Blood, acceptance through him, going to God by him, *Gal.* 1. 8. 'Tis weakneſs to be credulous, *Prov.* 14. 15.

5. To caſt Honour upon Scripture. It ſpeaks its Authority, and Sufficiency, 2 *Pet.* 1. 21. *Spake as moved by the Holy Ghoſt*, 2. *Tim.* 3. 16, 17. Scripture is given, to *make perfect, and throughly to furniſh.*

6. To teach us the way of Underſtanding Scripture and Improving it to the full.

Therefore if any now a-days ſhould riſe up among us, under the beſt colour, the beſt pretence, and declare any thing in the Name of God, which he cannot give an Account of by Reaſon, or by Scripture, we have Authority enough to refuſe it. Of all things under Heaven it doth not become a Chriſtian to be credulous; or Light of Faith. Who can pretend to ſpeak to you, as St. *Paul* did? And yet he did think it did become him, to prove out of the Ancient Prophets. Let us not compromiſe: Let us not be credulous; but let every Man ſee that they that do Dictate, or propoſe any thing of Religion or Conſcience, that they give very good Aſſurance; ſince St. *Paul* in declaring, doth *Prove, as it is written.* That is my Obſervation. It is the greateſt Impotency to be Credulous. Let us lay aſide Credulity, and ſlight believing.

Secondly, That Men that have been inſpired have taken liberty to quote *Scripture* in a very great *Latitude*, *Heb.* 13. 5. *Let your converſation be without Covetouſneſs; and be content with ſuch things as ye have; for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee.* The Apoſtle makes it a *general* Promiſe to all Perſons, when it was a particular Promiſe to *Joſhua*, when he was ſubſtituted in the Place of *Moſes*, *Joſh.* 1. 5. and we ſay, we muſt not conclude a General from

Vol. III. from a particular: So, *Heb.* 1. 5. *I will be to him a Father, and he ſhall be to me a Son.* 2 Sam. 7. 14. ſo, Matt. 26. 31. *I will ſmite the Shepherd, from* Zach. 13. 7. ſo *Matt.* 8. 17. being an Interpretation of *Iſai*, 53. 4. *That it might be fulfilled which was ſpoken by* Eſaias *the Prophet, ſaying, himſelf took our Infirmities, and bare our Sickneſſes.* The Evangeliſt Applies it to his compaſſionating the ſick and weak; which is not the fulneſs of the Prophecy. So *Mat.* 2. 15. the Evangeliſt proves Chriſt was to *come out of Egypt*, from *Hoſea* 11. 1. *When Iſrael was a Child I loved him, and called my Son out of Egypt.* So again, *Heb.* 2. 13. *Behold I and the Children which God hath given me:* That is, Chriſt and Believers, Chriſt and Chriſtians; quoted from *Iſa.* 8. 18. which doth particularly refer to that Prophet. *Behold I, and the Children whom the Lord hath given me, are for Signs and for Wonders in Iſrael.* So, *Acts* 2. 31. *He ſeeing this before, ſpake of the Reſurrection of Chriſt, that his Soul was not left in Hell, neither his Fleſh did ſee Corruption*; from *Pſalm.* 16. 10. where the Words refer to *David.* So, *John* 13. 18. *I ſpeak not of you all; I know whom I have choſen: But that the Scripture may be fulfilled: He that Eateth Bread with me, hath lifted up his Heel againſt me*, taken from *Pſalm* 41. 9. *Judas* and *Achitophel.* So, *John* 19. 26. It is ſaid the Souldiers did not break a Bone of our Saviour: *As it is written, a Bone of him ſhall not be broken.* It is no where written of Chriſt, but only of a Type, It is ſaid of the Paſchal Lamb, *Ex.* 12. 46. and *Numbers* 9. 12. *Neither ſhall ye break a Bone thereof.*

An Account of this in ſeven Particulars.

1. There is either the *like Notion*:

Or, 2. A *Parity of Reaſon*:

Or, 3. A *Proportion of Time.* That in our time, that holds a proportion to ſomething in former time.

Or

Diſc. XVI.

Or, 4. There is the Relation of *Type* and *Antitype*: Moſt of the things in the Old Teſtament were Types of Chriſt, or ſomething belonging to him; ſo that that which is true of the Type, is true of the Antitype.

Or, 5. By way of *Alluſion* and Accommodation; and no Proof at all: So that place, *their ſound is gone out through all the Earth*, meaning the Heavenly Bodies, the Sun, Moon and Stars: and St. *Paul* brings it, as proving that the Goſpel was made known to Mankind. Pſal. 19. 4. Rom. 10. 18.

Or, 6. The Scripture doth *own Scripture-Phraſe*, and takes delight to uſe it.

Or, 7. There is the *Increaſe* of the Senſe. For Prophetical Scripture is often fulfilled, ſometimes in one Senſe, ſometimes in another.

By theſe ſeven you may give account of that great Liberty and *Latitude* Holy Men have taken, when they have applied the Old Teſtament to the New.

To make ſome *Uſe* of this, that the Scripture of the New Teſtament quotes the Scripture of the Old Teſtament, with a very great Latitude.

1. Though the Credit and Truth of Scripture is diſcharged by one Senſe, yet we may otherwiſe uſe Scripture, if the Words may alſo well bear it: We may otherwiſe uſe Scripture, than in the Senſe mainly and primarily intended in the place whence we fetch it, if the Senſe be conſiſtent with it. So doth the Apoſtle here in this Quotation, *The juſt ſhall live by Faith*, &c.

2. I ſuperadd, That it becomes Perſons who do not pretend to an extraordinary Inſpiration, to underſtand and Interpret Scripture, no otherwiſe than the Context leads to: And that for this Reaſon.

If you give leave, and liſten to Perſons that now pretend to a private Spirit of interpreting, and who do not give us Aſſurance that their Interpretation

is

is warranted by the Context; we ſet wanton Wit at Liberty, to bring in any Fancy whatſoever, and lay a Foundation for all manner of imaginary Conceit; and ſo fruſtrate and enervate Scripture, as a Rule of Faith. If you let go Scripture in the Senſe to which the Context leads; and if you let go the true and impartial Propoſals, and Dictates of ſober Reaſon; then do we open the Door to all manner of Deluſion and Impoſture; and ſhall be carried, we do not know whither. Let us ſtand by theſe two; for theſe are the two certain Principles. If we lay theſe aſide, we do not know where we ſhall be carried, unleſs we fall into the Hands of truly divinely inſpired Men.

Now to fall npon the 18th *Verſe.*

For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men that hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.

The Wrath of God. Not that there is any ſuch thing in God as Paſſion that doth diſturb or diſcompoſe him, as our Paſſions do us; who are ſometimes tranſported by them, and put from our Reaſon; as is well obſerved of any Man. A Man in Paſſion, the Eye of his Mind is clouded: And no Man that is wiſe will truſt himſelf, if once moved, or affected. But you muſt underſtand, when theſe things are attributed to God, it is by way of Accommodation to us; and you are to underſtand the Effect, not the Affect: Snch effects as proceed from Diſpleaſure, they are uſed only to convey and carry Notions of things to our Apprehenſions.

Revealed from Heaven. That is juſt as the Phraſe is, 1 *Cor.* 15. 47. There are five things intimated in this form of Words.

1. That the *Guiſe*, Mode, Uſage, Faſhion, Cuſtom of the World, are not Supream, not Sovereign, ſo as nothing above them. Theſe things that Men ſo greatly dote upon, Guiſe, Mode, Faſhion,

Faſhion, Uſage, Cuſtom; we muſt bring theſe to the Touch-ſtone. Diſc. XVI.

2. *Revealed from Heaven.* It gives us this Intimation: That God doth *Superintend* over our Carriages and Behaviours; and looks upon himſelf as concerned in our Circumſtances and Tranſactions. The Atheiſt and Irreligious are aggrieved hereat, and do queſtion this, and would fain ſet their Hearts at reſt about it, and disbelieve it. But thoſe that are the Obſervers of God, and have Expectance from God, do believe this to be true, and rejoyce in it.

3. *Revealed from Heaven.* It intimates, that Wickedneſs is of ſo odious a Nature, ſo clamorous in it ſelf, and ſo provoking, that the Noiſe and *Cry of it aſcends to Heaven*, and cauſes God, as it were, to look down. Other Scriptures declare as much, *Gen.* 18. 20, 21. *And the Lord ſaid, becauſe the Cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and becauſe their Sin is very grievous; I will go down.* And *James* 5. 4. *Behold the Hire of the Labourers which have reaped down your Fields, which is of you kept back by Fraud, crieth: And the Cries of them which have reaped, are entred into the Ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth.*

4. The fourth Intimation is, the *Certainty* of *Puniſhment*: For the Wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven. If the Powers of the World ſhould unite: If the Wits of Politicians ſhould contrive, and the force of Gold and Bribery ſhould be uſed; there is no ſheltring of Sinners from the God of Heaven, to whom all things lie open; no finding a way to eſcape, *Rev.* 6. 16. If Authority here below neglect to puniſh Sin, we cannot be ſure God will not. If a Malefactor make an Eſcape through Power, or Favour, or any Art or Trick, God's Judgment is Supervenient. This intimates *Certainty*; becauſe God appears from Heaven.

5. Here is the *Justice* of Punishment in two Particulars.

1. Because it will be done *openly*. God will do what he doth openly, *Revealed from Heaven*, in the view of all, *Psal.* 98. 2. *The Lord hath made known his Salvation, his Righteousness hath he openly shewed in the sight of the Heathen.* And it is said at the last day, *God will judge the World in Righteousness*: When all shall be Raised at the sound of the Trumpet.

2. Done in a due *Measure* and Proportion: It shall not exceed the Demerit of the Fact. And this we are assured of, because it is from Heaven; and Heaven is God's Throne, and is a Throne of Righteousness. Ps. 97. 2.

Against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men.

You have two Words here.

Ἀσέβεια *in violato Dei cultu.* *Ungodliness*, which lies in Profaneness in the Worship of God: In flying into the Face of God himself; that is properly Impiety.

Ἀδικία *in violata æquitate erga Homines.* Then *Unrighteousness*. In strictness it lyes in Variation from the Rule of Right, in our Transactions with Men. Unrighteousness is Injury against a Man's Neighbour.

Ἐν δὲ δυσὶν. Or else the superadding Unrighteousness to Ungodliness doth intimate, that whosoever is Ungodly is Unrighteous between God and himself. For our Devotion to God, is as much his due, as any thing is our due in the World.

Omne genus mali. Or *Lastly*. These two, Ungodliness and Unrighteousness do Comprehend the whole Species of Evil.

Who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.

This is the great Iniquity of us Mortals; upon the account of which we are self-condemned, yea lost to Eternity, this *holding Truth in Unrighteousness*.

The *Truth of God* it admits of many distinctions; but I would only speak of Truth by way of Emanation

nation. There is in Divinity, a *distinction of Truth* that is of main and Principle concernment; that is, the Distinction of Truth in respect of its *Emanation* from God, the Father of Truth; For all Truth is a Ray, and a Beam from God, who is the Father of Truth. Now God Communicates himself to us two ways. Disc. XVI.

1. In the Moment of the Creation; and that we call *Truth of the first inscription*, or the Light of God's Creation, or the Principle of Natural Conscience, the true issue of Reason. For whatever Men say, they who take away Reason in things of Religion, take away the Ground upon which God will examine the Nations, at the Day of Judgment. For God doth not call any one to an account for that Talent he never gave. So that if none were to give an account at the last day, but those to whom the Bible is known, it would not be the 20th part of the World. Now by this Principle of God's Creation, Man is obliged to all things that are substantially good: All things that are immutable and unalterable are founded upon this Principle: Therefore the report of our Faculties, which God made true (and it is impossible a Monster should come out of God's hands) is true; as sure as God made them true, so sure they are true. The proper Result of a Faculty is true, as it is true that the Sun is Light. This therefore is the *Truth of the first Inscription*: What the Reason of a Man's Mind doth determine: And whosoever goes against the Reason of his Mind is self-condemned, destroys Conscience, and he roots out (so far as he can) every thing of God in his Soul. And upon this is founded all the great things in Religion and Conscience, all the things that Sanctify a Man, and make him capable of being happy.

2. The second Emanation of Truth, is the Truth of *After-Revelation*. For such is the great Goodness

of God, that having fallen, he doth Reveal to him upon what Terms he will receive and Pardon Sinners. It was *Probable*, that God would Pardon Sin to those that did Repent, leave of to Sin, and return to Duty: But by Revealed Truth, we have *Assurance* of this: And *this is the Light of the Day-spring from on high visiting us.* Luk. 1. 78.

By the *former* of these, we come to the knowledge of Piety toward God, Justice toward Man, and Sobriety to our selves.

By the *latter*, we come to know in what way we that have been Apostates, shall be Accepted.

So that the first hath a deeper Foundation, than that God gave us a Law engraven in Stone, or that we have the Ten Commandments in the Bible. God did *make* Man first to these things: For the very Dictates of Natural Conscience, God did interweave them into the very Principles of our Frame and Constitution. No Man is impious against God, or Unrighteous toward his Neighbour (unless he have contracted a Reprobacy of sense) and no Man is Excessive, as to himself, but he hath an Internal Reprover. A Man is departed from himself, if he be disobedient in any of these great Instances of Morality. If Man had continued Right and straight, he would never have needed a Law without him; because he would have been a Law to himself: But since we have Degenerated, and Apostatized; since we have contracted Guilt, the Divine Goodness hath been pleased to awaken us, and call us to Advertency and Consideration, by a Law without us: And that was first by the Ten Commandments engraven upon Tables of Stone, and now written in the Bible; which Law was a Coppy of the Law written in Man's Heart before he became a Sinner. For had there not been a Law written in the Heart of Man, a Law without would have done very little. No Man can prove any thing to him that grants nothing,

nothing: And he that knows nothing, grants nothing: Whoſoever finds not within himſelf a Principle ſuitable to the Moral Law, whence of choice he doth comply with it, he is departed from himſelf and has loſt the Natural Perfections of his being. So you ſee what was Vital and Principal in the firſt State, and what was for Recovery. So now in the Goſpel-State, you have the *Law of the Spirit of Life in Chriſt Jeſus*, and that Correſponds with the *Law written in Man's Heart*: And then you have the Law written in the New Teſtament, and that holds a proportion to the Law written in the Tables of Stone. And as the Law written upon the Tables of Stone was in reſpect of the Law of the Creation written upon Man's Heart; ſo in the Goſpel-State, there is the Principle of Regeneration; and for the advantage of *that* you have what is written in the new Teſtament. So you have it in *Heb.* 8. 10. quoted from *Jer.* 31. 33. Theſe diſtinctions are very neceſſary for you to Underſtand: You have Truth of Natural Light, and Truth Revealed in Holy Scripture. Diſc. XVI.

Now to hold *Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.*] This is a *Hebraiſm*: That is, unjuſtly to detain. For it is but Juſtice, to give a Man's ſelf up to the Obedience of Truth: And Truth loves to break forth, and ſhew it ſelf: And it is to be imagined, according as Men know, ſo they are, and ſo they do. God hath an Action of falſe Impriſonment, in the behalf of his Truth, againſt every Man that doth not obey and fulfil the Truth that he knows. *Iniuſtitia* עוֶלֶת *pro* injuſte.

Now this puts us upon a double and neceſſary Duty; and no Man can be a good Man that fails in theſe two.

1. It lies upon us to *awaken* our ſelves to the Knowledge God hath made us to; by ſerious Conſideration, impartial Self-examination, and free Communication one with another. He is not a

modeſt Man, that thinks himſelf wiſe enough to find out Truth, and judge of it without ſubmitting it to other Mens thoughts. This is the firſt, That a Man awaken himſelf to the Knowledge God hath made him to: That is, to know the great Difference between Good and Evil, upon a Moral conſideration. And to acquaint himſelf with this, he ought ſeriouſly to conſider, impartially to examine, and freely to communicate. Whoſoever fails in theſe, can never come at the Truth. The

2. Duty, is to comply with ſuch Knowledge, and to fulfil it; that is, neither down-right contradicting it, as the Atheiſts doth, and the Prophane: So to deſtroy and avoid it, by contrary cuſtom and practice, more violent at firſt, but after facilitated by uſe: Nor to abate it, by uſing Colours, and partial Diſtinctions, to evade it, and elude it, as Men are apt to do.

But to give it you in ſeveral Particulars. In Five Inſtances there is *holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.*

1. Where there is Knowledge that doth not go forth into *Act.* For a Man may be no better than a Devil, by Knowledge barely.

2. Where we do not attain a due *Growth.* For where there is a Principle, there will be Growth; unleſs there be Violence, or ſome Evil Accident.

3. When Men *elude* their Judgments, by a Put-off, a Shift, or an Evaſion: As when ehe Drunken-Man calls it only Good-Fellowſhip; or he that is conceited and turbulent in Religion, calls himſelf zealous for Truth.

4. When we do not follow Truth *fully*, but as *Herod* did many things, according to St. *John*'s Doctrine; but he did not do all.

5. That high degree of Sin, *going againſt a* Man's own *Knowledge and Judgment*, ſo as to contract Reprobacy of Mind, Searedneſs of Conſcience, Hard-

neſs

ness of Heart; which is the desperatest way of sinning, either here, or in Hell.

DISCOURSE XVII.

The absolute Necessity of Religious Obedience, and unavoidable Perdition of the Disobedient.

ROM. 1. 18.

For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men, that hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.

HAving made Explication of the several Phrases in the Text; I proceed now to give you a Declaration of this horrid Sin, *holding Truth in Unrighteousness*; which admits of several Degrees. Disc. XVII.

1. Where Knowledge goes not forth into Act: Where Knowledge doth not attain the Effect of *Goodness*: For bare Knowledge doth not sanctifie. The impure Sect of the *Gnosticks* denominated themselves from Knowledge. A Man may be no better than the Devil by Knowledge barely. *Demones sciunt, & contremiscunt.*

2. Where there is not attaining due *Growth*: For there will be Growth where there is a Principle; if not Violence, or some ill Accident. Where Nature begins, it goes on toward Perfection; and there is a State of Increment, till it come to Perfection, either in Bulk or Maturity. So in Nature; so in Grace, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. We may distinguish indeed between Christians newly born, and Christians in *Natura progreditur ad perfectiora. Status incrementi. Omnia tendunt ad suam perfectionem.* 2 Pet. 3. 18, Eph. 3. 16, 17, 18.

in their full Strength: But it doth not become a Chriſtian to be ſtill as much in the dark, as he was at firſt. There is wrong done to Truth, if it ſtay long in the place of breaking forth.

Hoſ. 13. 13.

3. When Men *elude* their Judgments, by a Put-off, a Shift, or an Evaſion. Thus *David* deceived himſelf in the Caſe of *Uriah*. He thought he could draw out whom he pleaſed in a Forlorn, and ſo leave them to be deſtroyed: For ſo it is ſaid, *Thou haſt killed Uriah with the Sword of the Amorites.* A like Inſtance was that of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who might upon ſecond Thoughts think that part was a good Sacrifice. And then *Saul*, he ſaves the beſt of the Cattle to Sacrifice to the Lord. Upon this Account we may charge the *Phariſees*. *Moſes* ſaid, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother: And whoſoever curſeth Father or Mother, let him die the Death. But ye ſay, If a Man ſhall ſay to his Father or Mother it is* Corban, *that is to ſay, a Gift, by whatſoever thou mighteſt be profited by me, he ſhall go free.* Here was doing that under one Notion, which a Man's own Judgment will not let him do under another, when the Caſe is much the ſame. So when that that is within the Species of Intemperance, is called Good-fellowſhip; or when a Man is conceited and turbulent in Religion, to call this by the Name of Zeal for Truth. Whereas Reaſon and Nature ſhould always be conſulted, and the Ear always open to better Information. We ſhould not think we have already attained, but may live to learn. This Point chiefly concerns things that are in their own Nature good and convenient, or elſe evil and hurtful. And here for a Man to uſe Subtilty, is greatly to abuſe himſelf, and to make himſelf obnoxious to God. For in the great Inſtances of Morality, here we ſhould be ſevere, careful, and exact. There can be here no Variation or Allowance; becauſe the Matter is fixed, unalterable, unchanga-

2 Sam. 11. 14.

2 Sam. 12. 9.

Acts 5.

1 Sam. 15. 15.

Matt. 7. 10, 11.

Quotidie depono aliquem errorem.

Γηρα σκω ἀει πολλα διδασκομενος.

changeable. Every Man is obliged to live piouſly towards God; to uſe Juſtice between Man and Man, and Sobriety and Temperance as to himſelf. Moral Precepts never vary: In theſe great Matters of Righteouſneſs, no Variation or Alteration: But in Inſtitutes and poſitive Laws, there may be a Latitude: Since theſe are for the good and ſecurity of the former: And in Ceremonies God himſelf hath given allowance, as in the Caſe of Circumciſion in the Wilderneſs, omitted for forty Years together: And in the Caſe of the Shew-bread, which *David* and his Men eat when they were an hungry. And the Reaſon is, Becauſe Morals are a Law in themſelves; and the neceſſity of them riſes from the things themſelves: But for Poſitives, it is enough for them that they are for a Seaſon. Therefore it is obſerved, that all Poſitives were always for Subſervience, and better Security to Morals; and when they have been uſed in way of Compenſation and Commutation for Morals, they have been ſpoken of contemptuouſly, and as if God's Stamp were not upon them; as in the 1ſt of *Iſaiah*, from the 10th *Verſe* to the 15th; and the 66th of *Iſaiah*, *Verſe* 3.

Diſc. XVII.

Joſh. 5. 2, &c.

1 Sam. 21.

Præcepta Moralia nunquam cedunt neceſſitati: Ceremonialia ſemper.

4. We may be ſaid *to hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*, when we do *not follow Truth fully*, as *Herod did many things* according to St. *John's* Doctrine; but he did not do all. The *Phariſees* in one thing would be exact, and expect it ſhould make Compenſation for another: Zealous in one thing, ſlack in another; and they are therefore called *Hypocrites*. This is when all wordly Ends do not veil to Religion, and worldly Conveniences are overmuch conſidered: For Truth is ſo noble and generous a thing, that it muſt not come into a Compromiſe with its oppoſite Rule of Truth; we ſhould abide by the certain, though it prove coſtly.

Mar. 6. 20.

Matt. 23. 14.

5. That

5. That high Degree of Sin, to go *againſt* a Man's own *Judgment* and Conſcience; and ſo, by violent and unnatural Practice, to contract Hardneſs of Heart, and Reprobacy of Mind. It is not God that makes Men hard; but ſo it comes to paſs upon their ſinning, when Men purſue their Knowledge by unanſwerable Practice. No Man is ſuddenly moſt deſperately wicked. It is hard for any one at firſt to do flatly and down-right Evil; but no Man when he doth begin, knows how far he ſhall go. The breaking in of Evil, is like the breaking in of Water. It is an eaſie matter to preſerve a Man's Innocency at firſt; but if a Man have done a baſe and a diſingenuous Act, no Man knows what he will come to at laſt.

1 Tim. 4. 2. Κεκαυτηριασμένων τὴν ἰδίαν συνείδησιν.

This for an Account, by way of Explication. I will now give you ſome Scriptures that carry the Notion; and then make ſome Obſervations. *Luke* 11. 33. *A Candle under a Buſhel.* A Candle is for Light; not only for him that ſets it up, but for the whole Room. *A Candle under a Buſhel*; that is, Knowledge confined; it doth not appear in Practice. Another is, *Matt.* 25. 8. *Lamps that are ſoon out*: They had Light; but it was not Light that did continue to be of uſe to the laſt. Another is *Verſe* 25. A *Talent hid in the Earth*: There it cannot encreaſe; it muſt be employed. Another Expreſſion is *Luke* 26. 20. *A Pound laid up in a Napkin*; no encreaſe upon it; no body the better for it. St. *James* calls theſe Men *Hearers, and not Doers of the Word of God*, *Jam.* 1. 22. Theſe are ſome of thoſe Scriptures that carry the Notion of *holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs.*

I will now make Two *Obſervations.*

1*ſt.* Diſcover how wrong and injurious Apprehenſions Men have of God.

2. I will make it appear, that all Ungodly and Unrighteous Men are Self-condemned.

1. That

1. That they are very injurious Representations that Men have; that Sinners have no warning, that Men are surprized by Judgments, and taken Unawares: This is without all Ground, since *the wrath of God is Revealed from Heaven.* Therefore this is Untrue, even of those that have been suddenly smitten. This Scripture that is before us is remarkable, both for the State of Life and of Death; wherein the way of the one and the other is declared. So that when I read the 17th. Verse, I wonder that any one that lives within the Pale of the visible Church, and takes the Bible into his Hand, and once looks upon this Text; that he is not only not almost, but altogether perswaded to become a Christian. Here is such an invitation, so full satisfaction, that the Kindness of God is declared from Heaven toward all that believe. Though we have been Sinners, though fallen Creatures, and are become miserable; yet if we have Repentance from dead works, and Faith in our Lord Jesus, through the Mercy of God, we are set straight again; and shall pass with God for Righteous, and shall come to Salvation. If this will not do, I do not know what will do more. But when I read the 18th. Verse, I am as much amazed at the Wickedness, and Prophaneness of the World. For will any ones Heart serve him to stand upon Terms of open defiance against God? To contest with him, and venture to run the hazard to go on in such a way that God hath so openly declared against? It is a Declaration from the Majesty of Heaven, against all the Profaneness of the Wicked and Degenerate World, *Isa.* 27. 4. *Who would set Bryars and Thorns against me in Battle; I will go through them, and burn them together.* Disc. XVII.

So that it is strange, any should say God is wanting to Men, either in warning, declareing or shewing them what will be the Effect of all their Unrighteousness. Now this wonder of mine doth encrease upon

Vol. III. upon this consideration; when I think what Effects have been upon the reading of some other Scriptures in former times; St. *Augustin* converted from Manicheism, and a loose Life, by reading *Rom.* 13. 12, 13. *Origen* after he had been brought to give some undue Compliance with the Heathen Idolatry, was exceedingly affected with the thought of what he had done, and brought off by thinking of *Psalm* 50. 16, 17. Also the famous Conversion of an Obstinate *Jew*, *Eman. Tremelius*, who afterwards proved a very useful instrument in the Church of God; was by looking into this Book. But now hath this great Instrument of God in the World, for the Business of Religion, and Conversion of Sinners, lost its Virtue and Efficacy in these latter times. Nothing can be expressed in Words to encourage to Faith and Obedience, more than the 17th. Verse; nothing more to persuade Men to walk up to their Light, than what is in the 18th. Verse. If this be so, then such Scriptures as these are verified, every Man's Destruction is from himself: And God will make it true, that *he would not the Death of a Sinner.* And he may challenge all the World, *Are not my ways equal?* Shew your selves like Men; use your Rational Faculties, and judge between me and my Vineyard. *Rigtheous art thou, O Lord, and true are all thy Judgments.* It is not that God doth not fairly begin with Men. That that is not done that might be done if they were not wilful and self-neglective, It is not that God is not ready to go on with Men that answer to his call, to carry them on further. For we may resolve, that if God, of his own Goodness, awaken us, and begin with us: If we answer that call, God will go on further; for no Man perishes through a failure on God's Part; but thro' Obstinacy, or Neglect on his own Part. God in his great Compassion doth Graciously begin with his Creatures; but he often finds them Obstinate and

Ezek. 33. 11.
Ezek. 18. 29.
Psal. 119. 137.

and Rebellious. It is not God that fails in the Relation he stands in to his Creatures, as first and chief Cause; but we are wanting to our selves. *Solomon* hath stated the Case well in *Pro.* 1. 24. *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my Hand, and no Man regarded; ----ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my reproof.* This speaks to the case of those that continue in a State of Sin, and refuse God's endeavours to reclaim them, and bring them to Good. And then concerning *Apostates*, the case is declared most plainly in *Pro.* 14. 14. *The Backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own Ways*; not any thing that proceeds from God's Will, or Power; but the Fruit of their own ways. The former speaks of Sinners all along from the beginning; the latter of Apostates from a good Beginning. We are highly concerned, to have right Apprehensions of God: And it is injurious to God, and most causeless, to attribute our coming short of Salvation to God's failure. For you see here is a Proposal, and Terms that are just and fit. For tis Reasonable, if we have done amiss, that we Repent, deprecate God, and importune him for favour. And it is also possible; for where-ever God begins, we are able, with him to do something, notwithstanding our contracted weakness; for where God is, there is strength. And then it is *Good* for us: For Repentance is Sovereign to our Natures, satisfactory to our Minds, and quieting to our Consciences. And *Lastly*, it makes us *capable of Happiness*: For we cannot be happy till Reconciled to God; and we cannot be Reconciled to God, while in a State of Sin and Evil. So that the Declaration is full in the 17th Verse. And then for the 18th Verse. If Men do not come up to practise what they know, they are Self-condemned. But this is the

DIS. XVII.

2. Se-

2. Second *Observation*, The Scripture doth suppose that Ungodly and Unrighteous Men are *self-condemned, against Ungodly and Unrighteous Men, who hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.*

Intelligitur Αἰτιαπτικῶς, *non* Διακριτικῶς.

I look upon these words as rendring an *Account*, not making a Distinction; as rendring an Account, how it comes to pass, notwithstanding all God's endeavours; that Men continue in Unrighteous Practise: The Reason is, because they *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*: For these Words, *Holding the Truth in Unrighteousness*, are supperadded as Causal, not as Distinctive; as giving an Account, not distinguishing Persons, as if some did, some did not.

Now, because this is a great point, I will undertake to give you a just account of it. I say, all that in Scripture are branded for *Sinners*, are Men that Sin against Knowledge; imprison the Truth, and *hold it in Unrighteousness*. I call those Sinners that the Scripture doth. I find in the Language of Scripture, that the Denomination of *Sinners* is never put upon Men that mean well; but are now and then in an errour, have failing, or do now and then miscarry upon a sudden Temptation, or Surprizal: Never are these Men called Sinners, nor the Infirmities of the sincere and upright-hearted called *Sins*, such as these sudden Incursions, and Abreptions, when their thoughts are snatched away from them, either in Praying, or Hearing. Sudden Surprisals, first Motions of Passion, Sins of Ignorance, mistakes in Judgment, misapprehensions, Irregularities of the first Motions, miscarriages upon violent assaults, and upon the Importunity of Temptation, and when Men are in a great fear and out of themselves for a while. These things do befal the best of us at times. But after a while we Recover our selves, and then ask God Forgiveness, and make use of Faith for Expiation in Christ's Blood. We pray God for Grace to Recover us, and for more Strength for the time to

to come. These make us more Modest, more Humble, and more sensible of our dependance upon God. But they do not break our Peace with God; neither doth the Scripture call these things Sinns. But I shall tell you what the Denomination of a *Sinner* is in Scripture.

The first in Scripture called Sinners were the *Sodomites*, *Gen.* 13. 13. *But the Men of Sodom were wicked, and Sinners before the Lord exceedingly.* They were guilty of the Sin not fit to be named in the Ears of a Christian Congregation.

In the next Place; we hear not of any called *Sinners*, till we come to hear of the Rebellion against God, the Conspiracy of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*, *Sinners against their own Souls.* Num. 16. 38.

The next is the *Amalekites*; Persons that had given God such an Offence, that he had concluded to root them out of the Earth. 1 Sam. 15. 18.

The next place where you have the State of Wickedness described is *Psalm* 1. 1. a State perfectly opposite to a good Man.

Then come to the *New Testament*, and there you find *Publicans* and *Sinners*, Persons that were thought not fit for any Man to be seen in their Company. Matt. 9. 10. And *Mat.* 26. 45. *The Son of Man is betrayed into the Hands of Sinners.* Such as *Judas*, such as *Pilate*, such as the High-Priests, and those that suborned false Witnesses. Remarkable is that place, *Luk.* 13. 1, 2. *There were there present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose Blood Pilate had mingled with their Sacrifices. And Jesus answering, said unto them, suppose ye that these Galileans were Sinners above all the Galileans, because they sufferd such things? I tell you Nay.* They did imagine they were extraordinary wicked Persons, because they suffered such Judgments. So *John* 9. 31. It was the Blind Man's Notion, *God heareth not Sinners.*

Then

Then see what kind of Persons are put in Conjunction with Sinners, 1 *Tim.* 1. 9. *Knowing this, that the Law is not made for a Righteous Man, but for the Lawless and Disobedient; for the Ungodly, and for Sinners; for Unholy and Prophane; for Murderers of Fathers, and Murderers of Mothers; for Man-slayers; for Whoremongers; for them that defile themselves with Mankind; for Men-stealers; for Lyars; for perjured Persons.* Such Persons as these in Scripture are branded for Sinners, the 13th *Verse* of the *Epistle* of *Jude. The Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints, to execute Judgment upon all, and to convince all that are Ungodly among them, of all their ungodly Deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard Speeches, which ungodly Sinners have spoken against him.*

Now here is my Observation, that these Persons that are branded for Sinners, did *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness:* They did wilfully sin against their Light, against their Knowledge. Now it will do well to observe this Distinction that Scripture makes, and to distinguish the Failings of the Regenerate, from Sin in this Sense: For Sinners, in the Sense of Scripture, are such as are highly exorbitant, that make havock of Conscience, and are of profligate Lives. Now the Scripture tells us, That *He* 1 Joh. 3. 9. *that is born of God, doth not commit sin:* That is, not in this Sense, doth not live in Sin, doth not voluntarily consent to known Iniquity. It is unnatural for any one in the State of Regeneration, to be a Sinner in the Sense I have now expressed. They have Failings, err, mistake, may be now and then surprized: But voluntarily to commit Sin, make havock of Conscience, violate the eternal Laws of Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, they do not this. If I were to speak to Sinners in the Scripture Sense, there is no Consolation to be given at all; but only Directions to Repent, and ask God Forgiveness,

and

and to begin anew, reinforce your first Conversion, if ever you were converted; if not, now begin. But now, if Men wrong themselves, then we are at a loss, and know not what to say to them. For if they have been subject only to Infirmities, that their Humane Nature lays them open to; have been sometimes surprized, have sometimes failed; if that be their case, then we say, Great is the Grace of the Gospel, and all its Promises are appliable; there is Pardon for them all, in and thro' Christ: And the Grace of the Gospel is enough to give all these Men satisfaction. If Men be Sinners, have a deep Sense of their Imperfections and Infirmities, Failings that are involuntary in some measure, we have then warrant to apply God's Promises. But if they be Sinners in the Language of Scripture, then nothing to say, but either you never were yet serious, or in a State of Regeneration; or else if you did begin, you must begin again, and deprecate God's Displeasure, and repent, *if perhaps the thoughts of thy wicked Heart may be forgiven thee.* In this case, having suffered Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conscience, you must make use of the Plank of Repentance, to come safe to the Shoar again. Disc. XVII.

DISCOURSE XVIII.

The absolute Necessity of Religious Obedience, and unavoidable Perdition of the Disobedient.

ROM. 1. 18.

For the Wrath of God is revealed from Heaven against all Ungodliness, and Unrighteousness of Men, that hold the Truth in Unrighteousness.

Dis. XVIII. YET once more, and then I have done: For this Scripture is very *Remarkable*. The former Verse telling us the way of Life and Salvation: and this telling us what we may trust to, what we shall at last find, if we neglect God, and his Declaration; if we do not make use of the assistance of Grace, and the Divine Spirit.

The point that I have insisted upon is, that those that are, in a Scripture sense, *Sinners*: In the Language of the Text, *Ungodly*, and *Unrighteous Persons*, do *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*, and are self-condemned: These kind of Persons are under a double Condemnation.

1. The Guilt of evil Practice lying upon their Minds.

Contra sensum mentis suæ. 2. Their own internal *Sense* reproving them, challenging them, condemning them. They are condemned of themselves, before they are condemned of God. Evil knowingly admitted, that is our Burthen; for all Evil is violent, and unnatural; and whosoever is a Sinner, in the Language of Scripture,

ture, is one that wrongs his own Principles. This I can make appear in respect of those three famous Instances of Evil. Dis. XVIII.

Impiety toward *God.*

Unrighteousness toward *other.*

Or else against a *Man's self*, by contradicting the Reason of the Mind, or subordinating the Reason of the Mind to bodily sense.

1*st.* As to *God.* If we do answer our Relation to God; then it will be Reverence, and Obedience, and Faith in its full Latitude, to wit, Faith of affiance, adherance, observance: this is the first, and is founded deeply in Reason, and in the Relation we stand in to God, as Father of our Spirits, and Original of our Being. Or if we consider our own State in Relation to God, a State of Dependance; we live at God's dispose, and subject to his controul; then it will be dependance upon God, submission to him, and acknowledgment of him; because he is our Superiour and Governour: If we do otherwise, we do contrary to the Reason of Things. Or if we consult our sense and experience; then thankfulness to God, and loving affection; because of the proof we have of his Goodness, Kindness, and Faithfulness to us. Or if we consider our Faults, and remember the Trespasses we have committed against him; then humble Deprecation, a sense of God's Patience, and Forbearance. Or lastly, if we believe that God will be our judge, then study and endeavour to approve our selves to him. Now if we answer our Relation to God, where can there be any place for Profaneness, Insolence, Pride, Presumption, Arrogance, Self-assuming, since we come into being at God's Call, continue in being by his Allowance, and must leave this being, which here we have by his appointment. Is. 1. 3. Mal. 1. 6.

To make this further out; this is fundamental to all Religion, that every one of us is *made* to know

know there is a God, without any teaching whatsoever; Man in the use of his Reason, may as well know that there is a God that made the World, and governs it, as he may know by the use of his Eyes, that there is a Sun in the Firmament. *Tully* observed, that if we by our Reason, find out *That* which is above our Reason, then are we made to know that there is an Intelligent Agent, transcendantly high above Mind and Understanding in us; and that that we know *we* did not do, we must necessarily acknowledge to be the Product of the Superiour Understanding. The first Knowledge is that there is a God: If God had not made us to know that he is, then it plainly appears that God could never judge us; there is nothing wherein he could have demanded of us: If not made to know that he is, we can never know it; for this we can never be taught; for upon whose credit shall we believe it? And if there be not a Natural Knowledge of God, there can be no possibility of Faith: For Faith is the receiving something upon Divine Authority, (all else is either Reason, or humane perswasion, credulity or experience.) Now if God do not make me to know that he is; if any one should Propose to me in the Name of God, I should ask, who that is? There were therefore an absolute Impossiblity of Faith, if God had not *made* Man to know that he is; for upon God's Authority, supposing his being and veracity, we admit, and receive all the Results of his Will. If Reason did not Apprehend God, Religion could not be learnt; there would be nothing in Nature to graft it on. First Principles are Self-evident, and must be seen in their own Light, perceived by the inward Power of Nature, as *ex Nihilo Nihil fit*, so *Nihilo Nihil Probatur*. Wherefore it must be within the reach of Reason, to find out that there is a God. Further, It is as sure in Nature, that Mind and Understanding in Man, do naturally

Tul. de Nat. Deo. L. 2.

turally tend to God, as heavy things tend to their centre; for God is the centre of immortal Souls; and the Mind and Spirit of Man is a Candle in Man, lighted by God, and doth diſcover God; it is a Faculty in Man to God; and to be employed about God. This I am ſure the Apoſtle ſaith in the two next Verſes, that it is knowable to Mind and Underſtanding, that there is a God from the Creation of things, and from Providence. Now if ſo, whoſoever is Impious againſt God, ſtands up in Rebellion againſt him; is not ſubject to all his commands; this Man Sins againſt his Conſcience, and is guilty of *holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*. This is the firſt. Diſ. XVIII.

2. For the *ſecond* Species of Sin, *Unrighteouſneſs*, that refers to the Duty we mutually owe one to another. He that fails in Juſtice, and equal Dealing with Men, he doth *hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*. Now this I find, this Principle, *doing as we would be done by*; according to rule, not wilfully, and Arbitrarily: This hath recommended the Chriſtian Religion to Heathens and to others. That that *you would not have done to you, do not to another*. This did highly recommend the Chriſtians to *Severus*, a Heathen Emperour. How do Violence and Fraud interrupt Humane Converſe? How ſettled do Men live in places where Law and Juſtice doth take place, in compariſon with places Arbitrary and Lawleſs. That for the ſecond Inſtance. The

Quod tibi non vis fieri, alteri nè feceris.

3*d* Is *Sobriety* and Temperance in the Government of our own Perſons. Man conſiſts of two Parts, of Spirit, and of Body: And ſo we fall under a double Obligation as to our ſelves; under an Obligation to our Minds. 1. To inform our Underſtandings; and, 2. To Refine our Minds by Morals Principles. Ignorance and Improbity are mental Diſeaſes; and it is worſe to be of an ill affected Mind, than an ill diſpoſed Body: We find that

Nature hath given to Man Faculties; but Induſtry, and Study do acquire the Habits. A neglected Mind is like the Sluggards Field, according to *Solomon's* Obſervation, grown over, *&c.* We may ſay of ſuch a Man that his Mind is given him only for Salt, and he hath no other uſe of it. Now can any one think that God hath given Men Immortal Souls, only to keep their Bodies from ſtench and putrifaction? We ought to attend upon the Refinement of our Minds, more than the Concernments of our Bodies, as our Minds do tranſcend our Bodies. Not an unequal Diſtribution of attendance, but according to Proportion of Worth, and value: For as it is requiſite and comely, that Sobriety be the Mind's Temper, ſo that moderate and Temperate uſe be exerciſed therein; for what is violent is unnatural; that exerciſe which is unhealthy for the Body, doth alſo ſtupify the Mind. Therefore Virtue of every kind is according to the dictates of Reaſon, and Underſtanding, and the ſenſe of Mens Minds: And Vice in every kind is greivous, monſtrous and unnatural: And I dare ſay, this is ſo certain, that all but thoſe that have vitiated their Faculties, know it; that Virtue is conſervative of the Nature of Man: To do according to the Dictates of Reaſon, this is conſervative of a Man's Mind. Any Man that is proud or conceited is in danger to be diſtracted. Then it preſerves the Health of the Body, by Chaſtity, and Temperance.

Pro. 24. 30.

Animam habent pro Sale.

Contra Ordinem Rationis, eſt Contra Statum Naturæ in Intellectualibus.

Thus have I ſhewed you in the three great Inſtances of Virtue, the three great Materials of Conſcience, the three unalterables, that are ſettled in the very Foundation of the make of a Creature; that *Virtue is connatural, and that Vice is unnatural*, and diſtructive to the Nature of Man. So that no Man hath internal Peace, that is either Impious, or Unrighteous, or Intemperate: But into whatſoever Species of Sin Men fall, they Sin againſt the Dictates

ates of Conscience, and *hold the Truth in Unrighte-* Dis. XVIII.
ousness. So here my Proposition is plainly made out, that all the Unrighteous in the World are self-condemned.

But me thinks I hear it said, that I speak but like a Philosopher, or a good Honest Heathen: For some Men think that *Virtue* is another thing than *Grace*; a Heathen Word, not a Christian.

I appeal to two Witnesses, and both of them Apostles, *viz.* St. *Peter*, and St. *Paul*, 2 *Pet.* 1. 3. *---hath called us to Glory and Virtue.* Glory, the Upshot and the Consummation of all: And he makes Virtue so material, that he puts Virtue for Glory. And verse the 5th. He bids us *add to our Faith Virtue*; *and to Vertue Knowledge*, &c. Then for St. *Paul*, *Phil.* 4. 8. Where he doth sum up all that he thinks worthy to insist upon: *Whatsoever things are true*, *whatsoever things are venerable*, *whatsoever things are just*, *whatsoever things are pure*, *whatsoever things are lovely*, *whatsoever things are of Good Report.* And can he superadd any thing after these? Yes. *If there be any Virtue*, *if there be any Praise*, *think on these things*, in the use of your own Reason think them fit and just and becoming you. If you think your selves Christians, charge your selves with the Study and Practice of all *Virtue*.

Now if Ungodly and Unrighteous Men are self-condemned, can it be imputed to God as severe to condemn again? He doth but *actum agere.* Great Reason for that. The Psalmist saith, *Psal.* 7. 11. 12. *that God is angry with the wicked every day.* For the Ungodly and Unrighteous Man, doth put out the Candle of God's own lighting in himself purposely, that he may do evil without Check and Controul: He doth check the Everlasting Rule of Righteousness, Goodness, and Truth, which is the Law of Heaven: He doth confound the very Order of things, and disturbs the Government of the World,

which is God's Family; and doth knowingly abuse his own Liberty. I therefore conclude, that these sorts of Men are Guilty of gross Misbehavior against the Truth, that is in their Mind, or can be come at by the use of Reason and Understanding.

To give you a particular Character of them; they are,

1. All those that do *not receive* Truth in the love of it.

2. All those that are under the Power of any unmortified *Lust*.

3. They who design ultimately their *own Ends*, their Honour, their Pleasure, their Revenue, *&c.*

4. They who are dearly in love with this *present World*; and to gain this, they will subordinate all Matters of Conscience.

Mat. 10. 28. 5. Those that are of dastardly and *cowardly Spirits*; for these *fear them that kill the Body*; *and fear not him that can cast both Body and Soul into Hell.*

These are the Persons that are most deeply guilty of this great Miscarriage.

But now, though my Hand lie heavy upon the Dissolute and Prophane, I must still make an Apology for the Imperfections and Failings of those that are Sincere and Upright; and in the Honesty of their Heart mean God, Righteousness, and Truth; though in some Particulars they fail sometimes, are mistaken, and fall short of their good Intentions: I will not charge these Persons in this Language of *holding Truth in Unrighteousness*. Three sorts of Persons therefore I except.

1*st*. I apologize for all such sort of Persons as mean God, Righteousness, and Truth; but upon a sudden *Surprizal*, before they are awakened to the use of their Principles, sometimes do amiss.

2. When under *dark* and *confused Apprehensions*, they cannot see before them. Or,

3. In case of *violent* or long-lasting *Temptation*.

I

I greatly distinguish between these two Cases: Such Persons who in some Particulars fall short, or are mistaken. Cases that do consist of a great many Circumstances: For we observe, they may be out in the Conclusions, that do not carefully mind all the Circumstances and Particulars. But for the *great Instances* of Piety, Righteousness, and good Self-government; these being written in the Nature of Man, as it were with a Sun-beam; as to these, they do not fail: For as to these, *He that is born of God, doth not commit Sin.* Dis. XVIII. *Quoad particulariora non quoad insigniora, famosiora, generaliora Jura.*

I come now to make some *Inferences.*

1. I do then observe, that Men *need not be so bad* as they are: For if this be true, that Ungodly and Unrighteous Men *do hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*: Then Men may *Escape the great Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of God and Christ.* 2 Pet. 2. 20. We are very apt to lay all the Fault upon our Natures; but really our Wills are rather to be blamed. That that undoes us, is our perverse Wills, corrupt Affections, stubborn Hearts: And these do more harm in the World than weak Heads: 'Tis not so much want of Knowledge as Goodness. God is a great deal more known in the World, than he is either observed or loved. But this will be the Worlds Condemnation, That where they did, or might have known, there they either grossly neglected themselves, or went against their Light: That Men put out the Candle of God's Spirit in them, that they may do Evil without Check: That Men take upon them to controul the settled and immutable Rule of everlasting Goodness, Righteousness and Truth: That Men are bold to confound Order and Government in God's Family (for so the World is:) That Men do Evil knowingly, in the abuse of their Liberty and Freedom; Whereas God himself, in whom is the fulness of Liberty, declares concerning himself, That

all

Vol. III. all the ways of God are *ways* of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs and Truth. And cannot God by Power, have Priviledge to do that that is not fit and juſt? Yet Creatures that are of limited Power, and have Liberty by Participation only, pretend, in the uſe of their Liberty, to extend Liberty beyond the Bounds of Law, and to do that that is not fit. This will be the condemnation of the World. A Man by this breaks his Internal Peace, and he will rue it to Eternity.

2. I obſerve that the Cauſe of a Creature's Miſery, is rational and accountable: and Men diſhonour God, and miſreport him, when they ſay any Creature falls into Miſery by God's Omnipotency. There is no Danger from God, if Men be harmleſs, and not ſelf-condemned. Miſery and Harm doth not proceed from abroad, but ariſeth out of a Man's ſelf. Wicked Men and prophane, run upon a miſtake, when they think that if God would, they might take liberty to gratifie and pleaſe themſelves, and no Harm done; and that it is only the Will of God that limits them, and that if God will forbear, they may eſcape a poſitive Inflict̃ion; and that Hell is *only* an incommodious place, that God by his Power throws them into. No; Hell is not only a poſitive Inflict̃ion; neither is it poſſible that any Man ſhould be ſo miſerable as the Helliſh State makes him, by any outward place only, but by the Miſery that ariſeth out of his own ſelf. For if Omnipotency ſhould load me with all Burthens; if I were whole in my ſelf I could bear them; but if I *be Faulty, and Guilty*, then I have a Wound within me, and *I have nothing in my ſelf that is true to my ſelf.* The Fuel of *Topbet* burning is Guilt upon a Man's own Mind; Malignity, and a naughty Diſpoſition againſt Goodneſs and Holineſs, and God's withdrawing. *Sin is an Act of Violence in it ſelf: The Sinner forceth himſelf*, and ſtirs up Strife within himſelf,

himself. And in the Sinner there is that within him that doth condemn him in the Court of his own Conscience. I dare say all else would fall, if this Internal Guilt might be taken off, and this naughty and malignant Disposition against God, Righteousness, and Truth. But this naughtiness of Disposition, and Spitefulness against God and Goodness, and an Incapacity of Repentance, is that that continues the Subject in Affliction. Dis. XVIII.

3. Again, I observe from hence, there is *something in every Man* upon which we may work; to which we may apply; to wit, the Light of Reason and Conscience, to which the difference of Good and Evil may be made to appear. For Unrighteous and Ungodly Men are self-condemned. Conscience in Men will yield, where Mens Lusts are not to be overcome. It is easier for one to approve himself to the Conscience of a prophane Person, than to his Humour.

Lastly. Here you may have an account what it is that gives a Check and Stop to the Motions of the Divine Spirit, and those that are the Instruments of God for Conversion. It is want of Advertency and Consideration. Men give themselves up headily to do that wherein they cannot justifie themselves when they come to consider. Now there is no place for further Grace, where former Grace is neglected and ineffectual. Self-neglect, and voluntary Allowance of our selves in Sin, is that that brings us into Misery. For there is no invincible Ignorance in respect of things good in themselves, in their Nature and Quality, and necessary: But this is Mens Condemnation, that they do not answer God's Call. And not to answer his Call, and be awakened when God speaks, this is a new Provocation: So that Men are *twice dead*, as St. *Jude* hath it, *Jude* 13.

But

But to proceed.

The Wrath of God is declared against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men.

I observe from hence,

1. That this is *plain dealing*. Wherein is there any thing hard or unreasonable in the Dealings and Proceedings of God? Behold his Justice and his Righteous Dealing. Here is Demerit on the Sufferers part, *holding Truth in Unrighteousness*: And on the Inflicters part, plain dealing: For the *Wrath of God is declared*. God deals clearly and openly with Men: And Men may know what they have to trust to. We seem aggrieved at God's Plagues and Judgments; and think the World is disturbed by them. But we do greater Acts of Violence. For we imprison Truth, and we take upon us to controul, and to do other things than the Reason of the thing admits us to do. We give to God true cause of Offence: So *we* are the Disturbers, not the Plagues of God.

2. They who are in the Scripture-sense *Sinners*, are in a State of great *Degeneracy* and Apostacy; and hereof they ought to be ashamed; and hasten to get out of so bad a condition; for they *hold the Truth in Unrighteousness*.

3. Hence we observe the formal Object of Displeasure: Not Creatures, but Sinners: *Wherefore doth a living Man complain, a Man for the Punishment of his Sin?*

Lam. 3. 39.

But in the last place.

When I consider these two Verses together, the former Verse declaring the Sum and Substance of the Gospel, That *whosoever* doth believe the Gospel, and live according to it, shall finally be saved:

And

And on the other side, God doth declare that all Ungodly and Unrighteous Men are the Objects of his Wrath. My Observation now is this: Dis. XVIII.

That it is truly Evangelical and Apostolical, as well to declare the *Wrath of God* against those that do continue in Sin; as to hold forth the Grace and Goodness of God toward those that do repent and believe: For you have the one of these in the former Verse; and the other in the latter Verse: And great Ground for this: For,

1. It is always good, as a *Means* that doth promote the End.

2. It is the *necessity* of the Case: For we are very prone to Security and Self-flattery; and therefore it is well that we be admonished of our Danger.

3. All is not in us *Ingenuity* toward God.

4. We are compounded of *different Principles*: There is in us the *Law of the Members*, as well as the *Law of the Mind*. Rom. 7. 23.

5. It is but *plain dealing* to the Unconverted and Apostates.

Now to apply this.

1. This may better inform those that are conceitedly wise, and undeceive them in their Partiality and Self-flattery. For some think, that in the Gospel-state we should make no use nor Improvement of the Threatnings of God. These are wise in their own Conceit; for you see the Apostle doth subjoin them.

2. It gives an account of the *true Zeal* of those that severely challenge Immorality. No Ignorance excuseth Immorality, in any Instance whatsoever: Whereas Invincible Ignorance doth Apologize for Infidelity in the chiefest point. The Reason is this; because for the great Points of Piety, Righteousness, Sobriety, and Temperance, God hath made every one to know them. But for the Reve-

Revelation of his Will, Men muſt be perſwaded of God; and if God doth not make Application to Men, where he doth not give he doth not require. The Goſpel Priviledges are not to give Protection to Sinners; but are Cities of Refuge for Penitents. They miſunderſtand the Affairs of Religion who take not all the Principles of Religion together, but do unſuitably diſtribute; not allotting ſeaſonably to the ſeveral Conſtitutions their proper Portions. We take a great deal more care in the Affairs of our Bodies: in theſe we conſider Mens preſent State and Condition: We conſider Mens Age and Conſtitution; and govern our ſelves both to Quantity and Quality; for we know that Unſeaſonable and Unproportionable Food doth not nouriſh, but annoy with Humours, and our Body is the worſe for it. So Spiritual Dainties are not to intoxicate the Head with Conceit, but to eſtabliſh and make a healthy Conſtitution of Soul: And what is that, but to make a Man Ingenuous toward God; and in Religion, Rational and Intelligent.

Laſtly. I take notice of the Boldneſs and Preſumption of ſuch obſtinate and rebellious Sinners; who notwithſtanding this Proclamation from the Majeſty of Heaven, *That the Wrath of God is declared againſt all Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men*; yet dare to aſſume to themſelves Power and Authority to controul the eſtabliſhed Law of everlaſting Goodneſs, Righteouſneſs, and Truth; and to vary from the Reaſon of things, to gratifie their own Senſe, pleaſe their own Humour, and ſo take upon them to unſettle things eſtabliſhed from Eternity. What ſhall we ſay of ſuch? And yet the Atheiſtical and Prophane do this. We muſt ſay of them, That *their Condemnation is juſt: Their Judgment lingers not*; *and*

Rom. 3. 8.
2 Pet. 2. 3.

their

their Condemnation sleepeth not. For if a Man be Dis. XVIII.
Exemplary in Wickedness; if he seduce others by ill Practice; if he be an open Scandal to Government; we think it is necessary to cut him off, that others may not sin by his Example. So that we need not wonder at the Judgments of God in this World; nor the future Condemnation of the Wicked and Prophane.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XIX.

The Illuſtrious Manifeſtations of God and the Inexcuſable Ignorance of Men.

ROM. 1. 19, 20.

Becauſe that which may be known of God is manifeſt in them; for God hath Revealed it to them. For the inviſible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly ſeen, being Underſtood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead, ſo that they are without excuſe.

Diſc. XIX. THough I intended no further, yet conſidering how full and pregnant this Scripture is, againſt the *affected Atheiſm* of a degenerate and an Apoſtate World; I ſhall not yet take my ſelf off.

In the former Verſe the Apoſtle doth affirm, that all Ungodly and Unrighteous Perſons do *hold the Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*: All impious, Prophane and Atheſtical Perſons, all Unrighteous Men, all controulers of the Right of things, all intemperate Perſons, are Men that Sin againſt Principles of Conſcience, they impriſon Truth, and ſin againſt their Light; they go againſt the dictates of true Reaſon, they go againſt their very make; they know they do evil and are ſelf-condemned in what they do. Now this being a great aſſertion, and an affair of Life and Death

Death, the Apostle proceeds to *Prove* it; and these Words contain the Apostles Argument. He proves it thus, because *God is Universally knowable*: of which Argument, before I do proceed to Discourse further, I have something to premise. Dis. XIX:

In that the Apostle takes upon him to *Prove by Reason*, I observe three Things.

1. A Check and Controul to the forward and presumptuous imposers on Men, that take upon them to Dogmatize, and are angry with all Persons that will not take up with their sense, and be concluded by it.

2. I here observe that the great points of *Religion* stand upon the Grounds of truest Reason; for the Apostle here proceeds to prove by Reason.

3. The *Dealings of God* with his Creatures are accountable by Reason; for some Men think that it is nothing but God's Will and Pleasure, that they are challenged for Lawless and unlawful Practises.

Now if this were not the way of God, a way worthy of Truth; I would ask why this Apostle might not refer his Auditory to his extraordinary Commission from Heaven? But he declines that, and takes upon him to prove by Reason. But this great Truth is hereby hinted to us, that the way of Reason is the way most accomodate to Humane Nature. Therefore let us lay aside imposing upon one another, or using canting in Religion: Let us talk sense and Reason. The Apostle here doth take upon him to shew by Reason; and this doth God himself, who hath all Perogative and Priviledge; he saith that he will draw with the *cords of a Man*; Hos. 11. 4. and what is that but by Argument; and Reason? Certainly therefore it were well becoming the Church of *Rome*, who doth so highly pretend to Apostolical succession, it would become this Church, to shew by Evidence of Reason, that their twelve supernumerary

points of Religion, upon which we leave them, that there is Reason for them. It is an Apology for any finite fallible Creature, if he be mistaken, yet to have some Reason for his persuasion; and if he be out, if he can but shew why he did so think, we may have him excused. 'Tis double security, and a high advantage to any teacher or instructer, to have in readiness to shew, that what he saith, is not his private Opinion, but is in conjunction with the Reason of things. The Reason of Things, in all matter of Natural knowledge; and Revelation in Scripture, for all matters of Faith; are the only Rules. Let every Man that takes upon himself to impose upon others, let him think that it doth become him to shew by Reason, and the Evidence of Truth, if in a matter of God's Creation: If it be a matter of Faith; by Text of Scripture.

But now for the Apostles Argument: That all that in the Language of the Scripture are *Sinners*, all that are impious or Unrighteous, they go against the Principle of Natural Conscience, and are self-condemned. And his Argument is, because God made Man to know that he himself is; *For the invisible things of him*, i. e. *his eternal Power and Godhead are plainly known and understood from the Creation of the World.* That is the highest date of a Creature. For a Creature cannot bear date before God himself; but a Creature bears date from the Creation. Now this is that that I am to declare against all the Atheistical and Prophane in the World, that the works of Creation, and Providence are sufficient to satisfie all Rational Creatures, of the being of God; the being of God Almighty and all his natural Perfections are plainly seen by the Effects of God's Creation. And this is necessary, in the first Place, to Religion and Conscience, that Men may be made to know there is a God: For what is *Piety?* Piety is Justice toward God: A Man is pious that doth his Natural Homage

Pietas est Justitia erga Deum.

mage to God as his Soveraign. And what is Con- Diſc. XIX.
ſcience in Man? Conſcience is Knowledge in us with God. We know, and God knows. *Secondly*, It is Antecedent to Faith. There is an impoſſibli- *Conſcientia eſt ſcientia cum Deo.*
ty there ſhould be any Faith in the World, unleſs there were a Natural Knowledge of God. For belief is receiving ſomething from God: And if a Man be not made to know there is a God, he may aſk as *Pharoah* did, when any one comes to ſpeak in his Name, *Who that is?* *Thirdly*, It is Fundamen- Ex. 5. 2.
tal to God's requiring Duty of Man, and his judging the World; for if God had not made Man to know that he is, Man could not be under Obligation of Duty to God, and no more liable to demand and challenge than the Beaſts. And how then could God govern the World? So therefore how the Atheiſt doth go about to demoliſh all!

Beza doth excellently gloſs upon theſe Words. This *Hæc notitia Dei recondita eſt intimis mentis penetralibus.*
Natural Knowledge of God, ſaith he, is wraped up in the Inwards of Men's Minds and Souls; that Men, whether they will or no, whether they be pleaſed or diſaffected, whenſoever they look into themſelves, and anſwer their very make; ſo often they are convinced, and ſatisfied that there is a God; and if they are averſe, they are ſelf-confounded. So that if a Man be devoid of the ſenſe of God; either it is where there never was one worthy Thought, never any thing becoming Man's Principles, no Product of Reaſon and Underſtanding, but where a Man ceaſeth to be in his kind: This is Atheiſm by groſs *ſelf-neglect*: And this Man lives every day to be leſs and leſs, he lives to be no Body: Or ſecondly if not ſuch a Man who is devoid of the ſenſe and knowledge of God, then he is one whoſe *Affection* it is to be an Atheiſt. He would fain have it ſo, and this is his deſire; and he ſtruggles, and does what he can to keep all thoughts of God out of his Mind, that he may freely and without controul, commit

Spiritual Fornication with the Creature: Or, *Thirdly*, where there is *Reprobacy* of Mind, by violent and Unnatural Practices; where Men by wicked Practices, have contracted Reprobacy of Mind, and have wrought out of themselves the sense of Humane Nature, and made void all the Principles of God's Creation: And this is often mention'd in Scripture, That Men by an Ill, and Unnatural Use of their Principles, have wrought out the Natural sense they have had of God in their Minds: By wickedness Men's Minds come to be blinded. *Aristotle* tells us, that the wickedness of Men's Lives and Practices, vitiates and corrupts the Judgments of their Minds and Understanding.

Ἡ πονηρία φθαρτικὴ τῶν ἀρχῶν.

Therefore I conlude, that if any one that is born a Man in the use of his Reason, hath no sense of Deity; either he is an Atheist by gross *self-neglect*; or by *Affectation*; or one that by wicked Practice hath contracted *Reprobacy* of Mind, and wrought out of himself the sense of Humane Nature and made void all the Principles of God's Creation.

But to prevent any ones mistake, I will here distinguish between the materials of Religion.

There be the materials of *Natural Knowledge*. They are the things I am speaking to, and those God *made Man to know*: Nothing more Knowable in the World than these; Piety toward God, Sobriety and Temperance in the Government of our selves, and Justice and Righteousness in our dealings one with another. These are immutable and indispensible Truths, and every Man is under an Obligation to them.

But then for *Articles of Faith*. These are the Resolutions of the Divine Will, and only knowable by God's Voluntary Revelation and Discovery: And to this purpose the Bible is God's Instrument in the World: And concerning these no Man

can

can know but by Revelation from God. Secrets of *Men* none knows but he to whom he will Reveal them: So of God. Disc. XIX.

But that there is a God Almighty; it is the most evident thing in Reason: And I am confident no Man can prove any thing in Reason, if he cannot prove that there is a God. It is knowable from the Creation: It is Knowable from Effects, within the Cognizance of Humane Faculties. I conclude this with an Argument out of *Tully* thus. Man himself being an Intelligent Agent, an Agent of the highest Order, Ability and Perfection in this visible World; and finding that his highest Principle, his Understanding, is transcended by sundry Effects of Wisdom and Power, whereto he well knows he can make no pretence at all; he therefore cannot avoid acknowledging a *higher Agent* than himself. This is *Tully's* Argument: And this comes to the Apostles Argument in the Text. The Reason of Man is over-born by the Effects in Nature: Therefore these are the Effects of an Intelligent Agent more Wise, more Strong, more Perfect, than our selves. And he must needs be good, because he communicates to us below him. *Tull. de N. D.* Lib. 2.

Thus stands the Argument. Things that do excell, and go beyond the direction, and guidance, and knowledge of us Intelligent Agents, do plainly discover an external Mind guiding, governing and disposing of them; which Mind must be antecedent and Original to Mind in us: And Mind in Man can be no more than in Resemblance, and in some Measure of participation of that Mind which is primary, Original and independant: And our Participation is in measure, Proportion, and Degree. And where Mind and Understanding in *Man* is Over-born, nothing else can make a pretence: For there is nothing below Man that hath either the perfection of Memory, Mind, or Cogitation: Nothing below

Vol. III. Man that can recal by Memory things that are paſt, or can foreſee things that are future; and comprehend all things that are coexiſtent; to look backward, and make them as preſent; to forſee future Effects, out of their antecedent Cauſes; and to comprehend all things preſent. And therefore there being nothing below Man that can attain theſe Effects which the Mind of Man doth; then if the mind of Man is over-born, if Man cannot, nothing elſe can; and if Man cannot, they have ſome other cauſe. For Man being the higheſt order in the viſible World, the cauſe that doth attain Effects higher than he can reach to, muſt be more intelligent at leaſt, and primarily Original, and independant. And we ought to imagine a more ſagacious and plainly Divine Mind, whence Man hath got to himſelf, Knowledge and Underſtanding, by participation: We ought to acknowledge ſuch a Mind in the ordering thoſe things, which the greateſt diligence in Man cannot reach. For ſince it is beyond Man's reach, and underſtanding, thought, invention, and comprehenſion; it is an Argument that there is a God. If I have this Notion, that there is an Intelligent Agent, who doth infinitely tranſcend me, then I have a Right Notion of God: And all that is ſecondary, owes Obedience, and Service, and ought to do homage. Now can any Man have a better Argument, or that that is more accommodate to his Principles than this? If there be *that* in the Nature of things, that Mind and Underſtanding in Man can never bring about, govern, nor controul; then it follows, that ſomething Greater, Higher, and Wiſer than Man, doth effect it, diſpoſe it, and govern it. And now I am to prove the aſſumption, that there are ſuch Effects in the World: Particularly,

(1.) The Variety, Curioſity, and Accurateneſs of Nature. We can in the uſe of our Underſtanding

ings only follow after God, take ſome Cognizance of him in his Works. Now there are ſuch things in Nature, that the Mind of Man bears no proportion to. Diſc. XIX.

(2.) Again: I inſtance in the *Proportion* that things bear to one another. And this is *Solomon*'s Argument in *Eccl.* 7. 14. and *Eccleſiaſtes* 3. 11. To what purpoſe would be the viſive Faculty, if not Light and Colours? The Power of Hearing, if not Sounds? The Power of Taſte, if things not Fitting? Now this *Fitting* of things to things, ſheweth, that theſe things are the Effects of the higheſt Reaſon, and moſt perfect Intelligence.

(3.) In the next place, I inſiſt on the Order, Courſe, and Motion of the Heavenly Bodies; their Light and Influence; which is ſo exact, that where, as we ſay, that quick Motion ſets all on fire, there is the quickeſt Motion, and yet no Exaſperation, or Conflagration; becauſe there is no interfering.

(4.) In the next place, I inſtance in the place of Fire, Water, Earth and Air: The interchangeable Intercourſe and Neceſſity of the Wind, to fan the Air; which would otherwiſe putrifie and corrupt. Likewiſe the Motion of the Sea: For Waters ſtanding putrifie; yet theſe have their interchangeable Serenities and Calmneſs.

(5.) In the next place: The change of the Seaſons of the Year, the Uſefulneſs of them, and the Neceſſity of them. So it is ordered, that, ſo far as may be, the whole World hath a juſt Proportion of Day and Night; and ſo anſwerable, a proportion of Cold and Heat.

Now theſe Diverſities do declare, that the Efficient was an Intelligent Agent. And ſince *we* that are the higheſt Intelligents in this viſible World, are at a loſs; therefore we are forced to acknowledge, that there is an Intelligent Agent of greater Ability than we our ſelves are.

(6.) I proceed further. The Proviſion in Nature to maintain and water the Earth; the want of which is the Mother of Drought; and Drought is the Principle of Barrenneſs. And this Proviſion is both from above and from below. Now we obſerve, that Water, and ſo every thing, doth gather it ſelf to its like. What therefore is it that hinders the mighty Clouds, and the mighty Seas, that they do not come together? So we may be drowned by that by which we are provided for. This is nothing elſe but the Contrivance of a wiſe Agent: This you have in the firſt Chapter of *Geneſis*. *The Waters above the Firmament, and the Waters under the*
Gen. 1. 7. *Firmament*, the great Sea: And God keeps theſe aſunder; and we walk in the midſt of them, and ſeem to be in danger to be deſtroyed by the Clouds and by the Sea, which would affect to come together, but that the Infinite Wiſdom hath aſſigned them Bounds. Now when we conſider theſe things, though we ſee not God with our Eyes (for we ſee not our own Souls by bodily Senſe; they being too ſubtil for bodily Senſe.) I ſay, when we conſider theſe things, we cannot doubt of the Maker, Moderater, and Governour of ſo great a Work, and ſo great a Performance. And though he be inviſible to our Senſe, yet our Underſtanding may find him out; for Mind and Underſtanding are a peculiar Faculty for God, to ſeek after God.

Now this is a juſt Explication of the Text, which ſaith, that the Deity is plainly *underſtood by the things that are made*; which is an Argument from the Reaſon of things. For a Miracle a Man may call in queſtion many ways; but if any Man produce an Argument taken from the Reaſon of things, it will ſtay upon the Underſtanding, and will convince and ſatisfie: And the more a Man thinks of it, the more he will be aſſured.

Now,

Now, it may be, ſome will be ſo ſevere, as to condemn this way to be uſed in Matters of Religion. Such I would deſire to conſider the courſe God took to convince *Job*. Read but four *Chapters* in the Book of *Job*, 38, 39, 40, and 41. Where God humbles *Job*, and brings him down from his Confidence, by Demonſtrations of himſelf, taken from the Effects of Nature, and from the wonderful Providence of God, in firſt making them, and then governing them. Diſc. XIX.

I proceed. If the *World Natural*, and the things that are there, do clearly demonſtrate and prove the Exiſtence of a God; the World of Inanimates, Vegetables, and Inſenſibles: Then it is abſurd for a Man to deny the Government of the All-wiſe God in the Affairs of the *World Moral:* By that I mean of Spiritual Subſtances; Subſtances endued with Reaſon and Underſtanding, and inveſted with the Royal Priviledge of Liberty and Freedom; who act out of conſideration and foreſight: And this upon a threefold conſideration.

Firſt. In as much as the Performance is *Nobler and Higher*, and therefore more Divine. If the Effects of the World Natural do clearly prove God's Superintendency and Guidance, and do preſuppoſe the Exiſtence of a Deity; then much more is there a Superintendency over the Affairs of the World Moral; becauſe this is Nobler and Higher; and therefore more Divine.

Secondly. In as much as the Conſequents, Effects, and Motions of the World Moral, are of far *greater Import* than the Motions of the Word Natural: Becauſe upon the Motion of the World of Rational and Intelligent Agents, who are voluntary and free; there is attained, either the Perfection of Moral Goodneſs and Vertue, or elſe there is the Defection of Vice.

Thirdly.

Thirdly. In as much as the Failings and *Miſcarriages* are of far greater miſchief: It is an Act of more Deformity and Uglineſs, for an Intelligent Agent to depart from the Rule of Right and Reaſon; to be in any thing Exorbitant, or hurried on by baſe Ends: It is a more ſhameful Miſcarriage, than if the Sun ſhould ceaſe to enlighten the World, and ever hereafter fill the World with Darkneſs and Stench. For, a Man is an Agent of a higher Order, and to follow the Order of Reaſon, is as natural to Intelligent Agents, as it is natural for the Sun to ſhine, or Fire to burn; and if he depart from his Nature, there is a far greater Miſcarriage, than if the Natural Agents ſhould depart from their Natures, and attain contrary Effects. For it is according to the weight of Nature, in the lower Creation; and according to the Dictates of true Reaſon in the higher World of Souls and Spirits. And as all things in the World Natural, when they are from their Centre, move to their Centre, and in their Centre have reſt: So in the higher World, Mind and Underſtanding moves toward God, is reſtleſs till it comes to him. Reaſonable Souls, torn off from God, are like dead Leaves that fall off from Trees.

While Mind and Underſtanding reſt in God, are in Motion to him, employ'd about him; Mind and Underſtanding is in its proper Uſe, and natural Employment: But if you rend and tear Mind and Underſtanding from God, it ſhrivels up, ſhrinks, and comes to nothing; and never enjoys it ſelf, till it return to God again.

Thus the Being of God, and his Natural Perfections, are *underſtood from the things that are made*

DIS-

DISCOURSE XX.

The Illustrious Manifestations of God, and the Inexcusable Ignorance of Men.

ROM. 1. 20.

For the invisible things of him from the Creation of the World are clearly seen, being Understood by the things that are made, even his Eternal Power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.

FROM the date of a Creature (for from the Creation is such) the things that are Invisible to sense, are clearly seen to Reason and Understanding: That is, that there is a God, and his Natural Perfections. And since this Scripture and other Scriptures use no other Arguments to prove there is a God, (for Revelation cannot prove it: For Revelation supposes it) therefore it is indispensibly necessary, to all Religion and Conscience, that a Man be *made* to know there is a God, otherwise than by Testimony; for there can be no Testimony in this, because it is the first Truth: I therefore keep to my Text, and demonstrate an Antecedent cause, by subsequent Effects: and whereas I have hitherto only shewed you, that there is a God, as the first Agent that hath made things in such Proportion, and due Measure, with so much exactness and curiosity, with so much of Wisdom, that we cannot but own an Agent wiser than our selves, and more Intelligent: Now I will shew you by four Arguments that it is more

more Knowable that there is a God, than any thing elſe is knowable.

Pertenuitatem entitatis, res fugiunt Intellectum. Neſcimus verum modos, locum, tempus, &c.

Firſt, More knowable in reſpect of the *Amplitude* and fulneſs of being that is in him. For this we reſolve in Philoſophy, Things are with difficulty underſtood, where they are of Exile Entities. We know not the modes of any thing: We know nothing about our ſelves, as to the mode: We know not the manner of our own ſleeping, or awaking: No Man knows how his Body and Soul is united: how from the ſame Root, as from a Tulip, ſuch variety of Colours: We know Modes no where, becauſe of the Exility and Tenuity of Entity: We are puzzled in Philoſophy to know what time is, what place is. It is not becauſe of their fulneſs of Being, but their littleneſs of Being: We ſooner find out the Sun, than a leſſer Light; we ſooner find out the Sea, than a little Fountain. So God is more knowable, becauſe of the fullneſs of his Being, than things that are of ſhallow narrow Beings.

Via Perfectionis: Via Negationis.

Secondly, the *ways* of our knowing do more truly hold of God than any thing elſe in the World. We have two ways to know; by way of *Perfection*, and by way of *Negation*: In both theſe ways we come to a more certain knowledge of God, than of any thing elſe in the World. *Firſt*, by way of *Perfection*. We need not fear to ſay too much of God. If we ſpeak of Man's Soul, or of an Angel in Glory, we may ſpeak too much: But of God, we cannot ſpeak too much. If I would do the moſt for my Maker that is poſſible, I would employ my Mind to find out what is beſt, and moſt perfect; and then Attribute it to God. For though finite Underſtandings may fall ſhort, yet this is the utmoſt Improvement of our Faculties: Neither can I report of him better than what my Reaſon and Underſtanding tells me, is upon every account, beſt and Perfectſt. So in the way of *Negation*; We can never remove

move circumſcription, Limitation, imperfection, far enough from God, Now whereas it is ſpoken in Scripture; the *Eyes* of God, the *Hands* of God, by way of accommodation to us; we muſt not Underſtand theſe things formally, but by way of accommodation to our Underſtandings. Now here we are at a loſs: When we have done our moſt, we muſt ſay, God is beyond what finite and limited Underſtandings can lay out. Diſc. XX. Pſal. 34. 15. 1 Sam. 5. 11.

Thirdly. Our *Relation* to him. We ſtand nearer related to God than to any thing in the World: Our Souls and Bodies are not nearer related, than our Souls and God. So the Apoſtle ſaith, *In him we live, and move,* &c. *We are his Off-ſpring,* Act. 17. 28. And then, it is the natural and proper Employment of Mind and Underſtanding, to make ſearch and Enquiry after God. *That we ſhould ſeek the Lord, if happily we might feel after him, and find him.* Mind and Underſtanding in Man are given him on purpoſe to come after God, and to enquire into him, and find him out: So that there is a greater Naturalneſs of a Man's Intellectual Faculties to God, than of his Eyes to Light, or his Ears to Sounds. And it is a greater Deformity for a Man to be intellectually blind or deaf, than to be blind ſo as not to ſee, or deaf ſo as not to hear. *Deus intimior nobis eſt intimo noſtro.* Τῷ γὰρ καὶ γένος ἐσμέν. *Omnis Intellectus Deum quærit.* *Naturaliſſimum eſt Creaturæ pati Creatorem.* Jer. 5. 21.

Fourthly. Our *Dependance* upon God, and his Conſervation of us, and Co-operation with us; this leads us to know him. Univerſal and general Cauſes have a ready acknowledgment; becauſe to them ſo many things are beholden. Take any Man of any Sobriety of Mind, if he do but relate a Story of any thing that befel him, he doth interpoſe, *as God would have it*: Or if he did any thing wiſely, *as God put it into my Mind.* Since therefore there is ſuch a Naturalneſs between God and our Souls; how is it poſſible but that we ſhould know that he is? Any Man, that is in any Degree Spiritual *Sol & Homo generat hominem.* *Nihil abſconditum a calore Solis.* *Omnia cum bono Deo.* *Operatur omnia in omnibus.* 1 Cor. 12. 6.

Vol. III. Spiritual and Intellectual, and not altogether ſunk down into Senſe and bruitiſh Affections: He doth find and feel in himſelf, that there are Foreign Suggeſtions and Whiſpers, that do direct him better, and carry him beyond his own Mind and Reſolves. Men *feel* God (unleſs it be the Atheiſt) in his Divine Motions, Suggeſtions, and Inſpirations. Job 32. 8. & 35. 12. For this I will quote you ſome Scriptures. *But there is a Spirit in Man; and the Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth them Underſtanding.* I do not believe God would have made Spirits Finite and Fallible, if he did not intend himſelf to guide and direct ſuch Spirits. The Pſalmiſt in *Pſalm* 94. 10. ſaith, *'Tis he that teacheth Men Knowledge; Shall not he know?* It is brought as an Argument, that God doth infinitely know; becauſe he teacheth Man Knowledge. Now an Argument is a thing that is known, and that Men will not call in queſtion. He proves therefore, that God muſt be of a Univerſal Knowledge; becauſe he teacheth Man Knowledge. This is therefore that that the World is well acquainted with, that God doth inſpire Men, and teach Men Knowledge: And this is that I ſuperadd. Now I infer,

Firſt. The Excellency of that we call *Religion.* It is *no Stranger to Humane Nature*; nor any of the eminent notable Acts of it: Such as Apprehenſion of God, Faith and Affiance in him, Dependance on him, Subjection to him, Obſervance of him, Compliance with him. None of theſe things are Strangers to Humane Nature. They are things natural: No Ground in the World more apt to produce any Plant from Seed ſown in that Ground, than this Nature of Man is apt to produce theſe Effects. It is not only a State of the fouleſt Deformity, but alſo of greateſt Violence to be without God in the World. Man contradicts his own Principles, and departs from himſelf, when

he falls off from God. No such Monster in the World, or more to be marvelled at, than a Man devoid of the Sense of Deity; as Men having *no fear of God before their Eyes.* Disc. XX Rom. 3. 18.

Secondly. Here you have an account of the *Use of Reason in* matters of *Religion.* Religion; there is in it the *Natural knowledge* of God, and the knowledge of the *Revelation* of his Will. Now the Natural knowledge of God, that is the very issue, effect and product of Reason: And then Revelation, which is the other part, is the Resolutions and voluntary Determinations of the Divine Will. These Reason is made acquainted with, and is the Recipient of them. For to whom doth God declare, but to Intelligent Agents? So that you see Reason hath great place in Religion. For all Natural Knowledge is the Effect and true issue of Reason. And if things be declared as the Council of God's Will and Product of his Pleasure, Reason receives them: The Resolves of his Will are communicated to Reason. Now in both these ways, we are *Taught of God.* In the former, we are made to know: In the latter we are called to partake of God's Counsel. In the former, we know that God is, and what his Nature is; and in the latter way, we know what God would have, and what he enjoyns as fit to be done by us, in order to our future Happiness.

Thirdly. I do then conclude and observe from hence, that there is no *invincible Ignorance* in any part of the World; as to the great Rights, the famous Rights, the eminent Rights: And I will tell you what I mean by these, *viz.* That God is to be worshipped and adored: That there is a difference between Good and Evil, upon a Moral account: That just and honest, are universally to be performed: That that which is upon a Moral account filthy, is to be avoided. Every one that is in Humane Nature

Nature and is come to the use of Reason, knoweth; or may know this. Nature and Reason, where violence is not offered, hath sense of these four things. We are wont to say of *positive* Institutions and Laws, there is no Plea for the violation of them, after they are duly published: Now if no Plea for positive Institutions, after publication; much less an Apology for the violation of these Laws, that are born Laws, that are Laws *suo jure*; such as are founded in the Principles of Humane Nature, and necessary in themselves; and not the Arbitrary Results of any Will or Power whatsoever. Such as are the Laws of observance of God, Righteousness to our Neighbours, and Sobriety as to our selves. If a Man varies from these Laws, he contracts Guilt to his Conscience, and is condemned by the sence of his own Mind. If this be not true, there is no certain Foundation in the World for that which we call Religion, or Conscience.

Fourthly. I observe that *Reason* is so far from doing any disservice to Christian Faith, that it fits Men to receive it. For Man in the true use of his Reason, knowing that he hath not performed his Duty to God, and being sensible that he is short and hath failed; Reason puts him upon Deprecating God's displeasure, and to think that God, who is the first and chiefest Good, will certainly be ready to commiserate the case of a finite Creature that miscarried, and doth Repent and Return to Duty. And this is Gospel; and this is that that *Jesus Christ* came into the World to confirm. So far is Reason from being prejudicial to any Articles of Faith, that it puts Men upon looking out, and enquiring after every good Word that drops from the Mouth of God: And taking up the Bible, and finding, That *God is in Christ reconciling the World to himself*, Reason saith, *This is that I did expect: I did believe such a thing*

thing from the first and chiefest Good; and now I am assured of it by the Gospel. Disc. XX.

Fifthly, and Lastly. Since the great things of Religion and Conscience are committed to Reason to keep and secure, why should we think the Reason of a Man may not be trusted with those things that are of lesser Moment. We need not doubt or question upon account of Conscience, any thing that lyes upon us to do, if there be no Prohibition from God (for which look into the Scripture) if the thing be not in it self *Irrational*, or *Absurd*. I say, provided there be no positive place of Scripture that doth declare concerning God, where there is no positive Resolution; we need not doubt in point of Conscience, to do one way, or other; if we do not that that is *Irrational* and *Absurd*.

Our Apostle hath asserted, and I think we have made it plainly appear, that *God is universally knowable*; both that he is, and what are his Natural and Essential Perfections: Yea, that he is *most knowable*, upon several Accounts; so that all those that are impious and Prohane, are without all Plea, Apology, and excuse.

There is a natural sense of Deity in every Rational Soul: And this is Fundamental to all Religion: And this the Apostle doth plainly resolve. The eternal *Power and Godhead are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made*: And this is an Argument to an Atheist, unanswerable; and a Reason satisfactory to the highest Understanding, and most pure Mind: to wit, from these Operations of God in his Creation and Government of the World; which do far exceed Mind and Understanding in the most refined Soul in the World: Therefore Mind and Understanding cannot Attribute these effects to any Principle inferiour to it self; but to one highly transcendant: And if he doth so, he doth acknowledge God. There is none that have

Vol. III. the use of Reason, but either they know there is a God, or else are Ignorant through their own default. I say, concerning the whole World Moral, either they know there is a higher Agent, of more perfect Intelligence than Man, or they might have known it: if they are Ignorant, they are Ignorant through their own own fault; either through the Neglect of their own Faculties, or through an Inobservance of the great Effects of God in the World; which shew and declare what he is: Therefore nothing more inexcusable, than Ignorance of God, and disregard of him in the World: So that they are without excuse.

To pursue the Argument a little further. The Scripture doth thus Represent the State of Man's Creation, that the proper Employment of Mind and Understanding, is to seek, search, and enquire after God, *Acts* 17. 27. *That they should seek the Lord if haply they might feel after him and find him.* The Words in the Greek are, εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν God gave a Man Mind and Understanding, to make enquiry after God, if possibly he might feel him: Feel him, that is by a Spiritual touch, when the Mind is clear, and free, and undisturbed. God did never intend that Reason and Understanding in Man should ever be adjudged to be a hewer of Wood, or a drawer of Water: but for observance of God, attendance upon him, taking Cognisance of him. This is that the Wise Man *Solomon* hath observed.

Pro. 20.27. *The Spirit of Man is the Candle of the Lord.* A place which upon this Occasion I always observe: A Candle is a thing first lighted, then lighting: So that Mind and Understanding is first made Light, by Divine Influences; and then enlightens a Man, in the use thereof, to find out God, and to follow after him in Creation, and Providence: And we find Degeneracy is thus described in Holy Scripture, *They have no fear of God before their Eyes.* *Without God in the World*

Rom. 3. 18.
Eph. 2. 12.

World; *and God is far from their Reins.* And it is the Fool's ſenſe, *that there is no God.* There is a Natural, and indelible ſenſe of the Deity in every Man's Soul: And conſequently he is under a Duty of Religion. And he that denies this, I do not know upon what any one can build an Argument. It fairly lies before every Man, when he uſeth his Reaſon and Underſtanding, to contemplate the various Effects in the World; to find out an Agent that is intelligent, and ſuperiour to Mind and Underſtanding in Man. *Ariſtotle* he ſaith, that the Heavens could not move, becauſe they are inanimate beings, if they were not aſſiſted by a Superiour and Intelligent Agent: And if I bring any Man to acknowledge, that there is ſuch an Intelligent Agent; then either it is God, or it doth acknowledge a Superiour; for if it depend upon a higher, I aſcend ſtill *ad Infinitum.* There is therefore no Plea nor Apology for want of the ſenſe of Deity: And this I will further make appear in theſe three particulars.

Diſc. XX.

Jer. 12. 3. Pſ. 14. 1.

Ariſt. Metaph. 2. c 8. ---& de cælo. L. 2. c. 2.

Firſt, No invincible *Difficulty* lyes upon any Man, but that he may come to the Cogniſance of a God.

Secondly, *Invitations* every where about a Man.

Thirdly, In the Chriſtian World there is God's Inſtrument the *Bible*, which gives a Man aſſurance and ſatisfaction.

Firſt, No invincible *Difficulty* lyes upon any Man, but that he may come to the Cogniſance of a God: Not the difficulty of Ignorance; for we are not taught this, but we are *made to know there is a God.* *Secondly.* Not of *Impotency*: For every Man may uſe his Natural Parts and Powers. *Thirdly.* No foreign *Impediment*: For it is a Tranſaction performed within a Man's ſelf; not ſubject to the controul of any Uſurper that may Over-rule us, or take upon him Power to diſpoſe us: For it is an elicite, internal act of the Mind; and the elicite Acts of

the Mind are exempt from all Power whatſoever. A Man may have Motion of Mind toward God, tho' his Body be in Priſon. So that, unleſs you can keep a Man perpetually from himſelf, you cannot keep him from Reflexion upon God, or other internal Acts. He ſaid right who ſaid, *I am never leſs alone than when no Body is with me:* For when I am moſt alone, then am I in the Cogniſance of God, and Contemplation of him. Yea, there may be Motion of Mind and Underſtanding toward God, in any croud of Company; yea, a Man may be at leiſure to make acknowledgments to God, and to own him, and obſerve him, and to iſſue forth toward him, though entangled in Buſineſs: For the Motion of the Sun is not quicker than the Motion of Mind and Underſtanding; a Man may take Cogniſance of God, and he that talks with him, not perceive an Interruption. If any one be devoid of all ſenſe of Deity; I declare it is the Malignity of the Subject, upon a three-fold account. *Firſt*, becauſe of the *nearneſs of God* to us: God is every where by the Effects of his Wiſdom, and by the Fruits of his Goodneſs; and to us, God is all in all, Original, Final, and the Centre of our Souls. *Secondly*, becauſe of the *Sagacity of our Faculties.* And *Thirdly*, becauſe of the nearneſs of *Light of Knowledge.* Upon theſe three Accounts, every Man that is devoid of the ſenſe of Deity, is in fault, and culpable.

Secondly, There are *Invitations* every where afforded us, to invite us to Acts of Acknowledgment, and taking Cogniſance of God. I ſhall make this appear in three Particulars. *Firſt.* The communications of God to us do awaken us: And what have we but by Divine Communication? All we have, and are, is by a Voluntary Communication from God. We are no where but Receivers. God is every where firſt, and the great Giver; God is he that beſtows upon us, whatſoever we have: All our Enjoyments

are

are the Gifts of God; and therefore *theſe* ſpeak ſomething to us, from whom they come. It is the Natural ſenſe of reaſonable Souls. *Lord lift upon us the Light of thy Countenance.* So that all the Communications of God lead us unto him. *Secondly*, the very *Principles* of Man's make do incline him to God; all Mind and Underſtanding tends to to God: All things move to their Centre, and God is the centre of immortal Souls. It is not more certain that heavy things fall downwards, and light things fly upward; than that it is Natural, and proper for Mind and Underſtanding to move toward God. Our Philoſophers that never heard of the Bible, this they acknowledged. It is as God's Money: *Cæſars* Money was no more properly his, than Mind and Underſtanding in Man, is God's: For it bears his Impreſs. The Soul of Man anyways by violence torn off from God, is like Leaves fallen off from the Trees, that pine, and fade, and wither away: But in God, who is their centre, they have reſt, perfection and quiet. *Thirdly*, If we conſider the whole Creation about us, they contribute, *by way of Object*, to God's Glory: For they have not Ability to do it by way of Efficiency. No Voice in Nature ſo loud, no Language ſo eaſy to be Underſtood: Every Herb, every Plant imparts ſomething of God. And this is the ſenſe of the Pſalmiſt when he ſaith, *The Heavens declare the Glory of God*, &c. *Pſalm.* 19. that is, by way of Object; becauſe they do awaken the capable Creatures; for Mind and Underſtanding in Man, is to ſee, and obſerve the Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs of God. For a Man cannot take Cogniſance of the Regular Motion of the whole Creation; a Man cannot look abroad, but ſomething or other ſounds God in his Ears, and declares his infinite Wiſdom, mighty Power, and great Goodneſs; for this is the Notion of Goodneſs to Communicate it ſelf.

Diſc. XX.

Pſ. 3. 6.

Omnis Intellectus tendit in Deum.

Anima avulſa a Deo tanquam folia decidua. Feciſti nos domine, ad te; quietum eſt cor noſtrum in te; i requietum donec redeat ad te.

Vol. III. *Thirdly*, To ſpeak a little more Home: Theſe two are general and teach the whole Creation: Now my Third Argument is only to the Chriſtian World. There is God's ſuperadded *Inſtrument*, the *Bible*, which doth contain matter of Revelation from God whereby alſo our Natural notices of God are awakened and enlivened. The Bible contains the Revelation of his Will, and the Effect of his Councils; theſe do further ſatisfie the Chriſtian World, both concerning the exiſtence of God, and what he is: And then in the Bible, there are theſe two things; the Conſonancy of the things therein contained, with the things of Natural Knowledge: and the Report there made of God, agreeable to what Reaſon leads Men to think. Theſe promote highly a true and juſt ſenſe and conſideration of God: Whereas one Neglective of himſelf in uſe of Naturals; not refined in reſpect of Morals; doth not Savour the things of God, thinks nothing rightly concerning him: He is uncapable of Revealed Truth, if in Contradiction to Natural Light, or wholly out of the uſe and exerciſe of it. And this is an Argument to a Philoſopher: So that the Bible doth highly promote a juſt and due ſenſe and conſideration of God. Being diſpoſed by the two former Arguments, this Book gives further aſſurance: So that here are my three Arguments. *Firſt*, the Language of our own Souls within. *Secondly*, the Impreſſions of the Divine Wiſdom throughout the whole Creation, and Objective Acclamations of all Creatures, carry us ſtrongly on to the Knowledge of God. *Thirdly*. Holy Scripture comes in to the purſuance of theſe, to Repeat and Reinforce them; ſo that he muſt needs be of a ſtupid Mind, or a havoked Conſcience, or a diſſolute and profligate in his Life and manners; that lives in the midſt of ſo many ſpeaking Arguments; and doth not ſpell out God, in this variety and curioſity of his Creatures; and doth not underſtand

ſtand the audible Language of Heaven and Earth. Diſc. XX.
Whatſoever Man endued with Mind and Underſtanding, partaker of Humane Nature, that hath no regard and apprehenſions of God, as the firſt and chiefeſt Good, as the Original of our Beings, the Centre of our Souls, our utmoſt End; he hath confounded his Principles, loſt himſelf in the World, ſunk down into Senſuality and Brutiſhneſs, or elſe in a compromiſe with the Devil; for he is departed from his Nature, *ſo that they are without excuſe.* God hath made himſelf ſo far knowable, both *that he is*, and *what he is*, by thoſe great effects of Creation and Providence, that all that are partakers of Humane Nature, and are devoid of ſenſe of God, *are without excuſe.*

Now I conclude with ſome few Obſervations.

Firſt. I take notice of the Infinite *Patience* of God, to endure ſuch Monſters, ſo degenerated from their make, as Men of ſtupid Minds, havocked Conſciences, and profligate lives, are. God hath *endured the contradiction of Sinners*, from Adams fall, to this Hour, *Heb.* 12. 3.

Secondly. Then the buſineſs of the Day of *Judgment* is very eaſy, on God's Part; but very ſad on degenerate Men's Part. For God's Work is prepared to his Hands: All Sinners are ſelf-condemned: God doth but *actum agere.* But then ſad on the Impenitents Part; for they have nothing left within them to bear them up; the very Reaſon of their Minds is againſt them. Nothing is more inherent to the Nature of Man, than for a Man to live up to the Dictates of ſober and impartial Reaſon. Now if Men do not do ſo, when they come to conſider, the very thoughts and ſenſe of it will over-bear them, and they will be confounded in themſelves. And this is that that is the Foundation of all inward Darkneſs; either not uſing the Principles of our Creation, or elſe abuſing them, by complying

Vol. III. with the corrupt guiſe of the World, or what Mens own Luſts incline them too.

Thirdly. I take notice of the greatneſs of the Work of *Reconciliation.* A Man muſt be made whole in himſelf, or elſe he cannot be kept out of Hell. A Man cannot be at eaſe, until all that he hath ſinfully done, be undone; and until right Judgment hath been renewed, which hath been violently forced; and regular Life and Converſation be reſtored. Now theſe are the materials of Regeneration. There is in Regeneration a Transformation of the whole inward Man, ſo far forth as he hath Apoſtatized. For he muſt be brought to comply with the unchangeable Laws of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth; and to a right Uſe of his Faculties: All this muſt be done; and this muſt be done by Divine Illumination and Conviction; and by a Man's giving conſent, that all theſe things be done in him, and upon him. Theſe three things muſt be: the ſenſe of the Soul muſt have a Divine Impreſſion upon it, which will carry a Man toward God; the Reaſon of the Mind in Reconciliation with the Reaſon of things; and ſevere and impartial Reaſon Govern and Rule in Life.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXI.

The unnatural Ingratitude of the Ptofane, and Irreligious

ROM. 1. 21.

Becauſe that when they knew God, they glorifi-ed him not as God, neither were thank-ful.

I Have given you an account from our Apoſtle, in the former Verſe, of the Natural Knowledge of God: That is, that God hath made us all capable to know *That he is*; and in ſome meaſure, to conceive *What he is*, and what are his Eſſential Perfections, his Wiſdom, Power, and Goodneſs: Upon which it follows, that Men do grievouſly miſcarry, are very ſhort, do not do that that is agreeable to their Natures, if they do *not Glorifie God as God, neither are thankful.* Diſc. XXI.

I will only take notice of two things in all the Words of the Chapter that follow; that is,

I. The uſe and Improvement the Apoſtle makes of this Natural Knowledge of God, which he hath aſſerted; and

II. The miſchievous *Effects* that follow upon Mens groſs Neglect of this Knowledge of God, of which they are capable.

I. The

I. The uſe and improvement of this Principle, *that God is fairly knowable by the Works of his Creation*; if we awaken our Faculties, if we call our ſelves to conſideration. And I think I have made it appear; that there is nothing more knowable, than that there is a God: And that there is a peculiarity in Mind and Underſtanding in Man to this purpoſe. Now this being conſidered, and here ſuppoſed, the Apoſtle brings in a *Charge* of a high Nature: For he makes it an Argument of Conviction, and ſelf-condemnation to all thoſe that are diſſolute, impious, and profane; that Men do not anſwer their Natural Knowledge of God: That they knowing him, do not live in regard of him, have him not in reverence, do not obey him, love him, fear him, ſerve him, admire and adore him. And this will be the Condemnation of the whole World: And this will be the Article, upon which the World will be examined at the Day of Judgment; that Men were *made to the knowledge of God*, and they took no notice of him, neither Glorified him as God, neither were thankful.

But to follow the Text.

Firſt. Here is the *Fault*, *not to glorifie God*, *as God*; *neither to be thankful.*

Secondly. The *conviction*; that they *knowing* God, did it not. For nothing is more certain, than that *Judgment ſhould be the Rule of Action.* And the contrary; *knowing God*, and yet being inobſervant of him, neglective of Duty toward him, not to ſtand affected toward him, is the moſt unaccountable thing in the World; becauſe every Man either hath, or might have knowledge, that there is a God: Nothing is more inherent to humane Nature, than ſenſe of Deity. I cannot therefore do you better ſervice. than firſt to give you an Account of this failure and miſcarriage: When Men may be ſaid, *Not to glorifie*

glorifie God, as God; when they do not do that on their Parts, that holds a proportion to the Manifeſtation that is made of God to them: Which account I will pick out of the ſeveral Verſes of this Chapter, and give it you in five Particulars. And the Diſc. XXI.

Firſt is, *Living without God in the World.* Whoſoever lives without God in the World, doth not glorifie God as God: For he performs no Duty to him, takes no notice of him, makes no acknowledgment of him, hath no ſenſe of his dependance upon God. This you have in the 28*th. Verſe*, *They did not like to retain God in their Knowledge*: Which doth import a contrary Diſpoſition, and an Averſation to God. Now this is apparently below Man's Make, and ſhort of the capacity of Humane Nature, and therefore to be accounted ſottiſhneſs, ſtupidity, and impotency, or ſinking below a Man's Species. For as I have told you, Mind and Underſtanding is a peculiar Faculty Appropriate to God: It is that that is its peculiar and proper Employment, to make ſearch after God, to be employed about him, to tender Homage and Service to him. Whoſoever therefore lives *without God in the World*, he doth not do a Manly Act, Mind and Underſtanding in him are loſt.

Secondly. For Men to entertain baſe Thoughts, and to have *Unworthy Apprehenſions* of God: When Men Attribute that to him, that is much truer of the contrary and moſt degenerate Nature; and which is not at all becoming the firſt and chiefeſt Goodneſs (and ſo we underſtand God to be.) For thoſe that are of malignant, ſpiteful, envious, naughty Diſpoſitions; they think it is the excellency of God to be Revengeful.

The Pſalmiſt hath obſerved it, in *Pſal.* 50. 21. *Thou thoughteſt that I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf.* And we find Men of narrow Spirits, have unworthy

Vol. III. worthy ſuppoſitions concerning God; rendring him as an Enemy to Humane Nature: And it is a thouſand to one but in theſe Men's Divinity, the Excellency of the Deity is ſoveraignty, and to do what he would. But nothing is more certain than that Infinite Goodneſs doth toward the whole Creation, what is to the full worthy Infinite Goodneſs to do. And whereas we ſee indulgent Fathers, that can compaſſionate their Children; that can deny themſelves, that can undo themſelves, for their Children: I account this kindneſs in them, but a Participation from God, and Reſemblance of him. The beſt Notion that you can have of God is, that he is *Good*: That *he hateth nothing that he hath made*: And *that he would not have any to periſh*. The Pſalmiſt ſaith, his *tender Mercies are over all his Works*, *Pſal.* 145. 9. *v.* And it is an eminent ſaying of *Jeſus* the Son of *Syrac*: The World is governed by a mild and a gentle Spirit, that is Benign and Loving to Mankind. And were it not ſo, I do not ſee how we ſhould live in the World: To think that God hath impoſed upon himſelf a Law, or hath any way limited, or diſabled himſelf at any time, to compaſſionate any compaſſionable caſe, this is an unworthy thought of the firſt and chiefeſt Good. To think that he is not moſt perfectly free in all futurity of times, to do that that is becoming Infinite Goodneſs, ſuitable to the Relation he ſtands in to his Creatures, is to make him leſs good than Earthly Parents. Two things a Man would abhor to have in his Thoughts concerning God; that God by Power can do that that is not right: or that by any Priviledge, his Kindneſs and Tenderneſs to his Creatures, may be abated: as in particular, not to Pardon Sin to a finite and fallible Creature upon his Repentance, and Reformation. It is as certainly true of God, as any thing that can be ſaid of him; that

God

God hath laid a Foundation of Repentance; that Repentance is Available, and ſhall certainly take place; that Repentance doth alter the Caſe, and ſhall alter the Sinners Condition. To ſay that of God that doth any way Diſcountenance the Application of his Creatures to him, in any caſe of Miſery and neceſſity, is *not to Glorifie God as God.* But to demonſtrate this with the greateſt clearneſs, this I ſuperadd, That *God is known to us, by Goodneſs*: and there is no true Notion of God, unleſs the full Form, Eſſence and Subſtance of Good be fully in it: For there is no abſolute Perfection but in conjunction with Goodneſs: It is a Divine work, to do good, and to gratifie; not to make havock, and to ſpoil: Wherefore God magnifies his Mercy, and Goodneſs, and Righteouſneſs, his fair and compaſſionate and equal dealing, above all other his Names. Dif. XXI.

The firſt thing in Religion is to have *true ſuppoſitions*, in ones Mind, concerning God; and if any Man be wrong in this, he will miſtake throughout: If we have not right ſuppoſitions in our Minds concerning God, we ſhall withdraw from him, leave him, yea hate him, and ſeek for Happineſs ſomewhere elſe. Ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις.

But *Thirdly.* For Men to aſſume to themſelves Power and Authority to aſſign a *Mean* of Worſhip: Some material thing, either Repreſentative of God, or Exhibitive of him: Some *Inſtrument* in Divine Worſhip, without God's warrant; or which is not accountable in the way of Reaſon; this is *not to glorifie God as God*, for this is to limit him, and confine him. This you have in the two following Verſes. 23. Verſe, *Changing the Glory of the uncorruptible God into an Image made like to corruptible Man*, &c. and Verſe 25. *changing the Truth of God into a Lie, and Worſhipping the Creature above the Creator*: Which I chuſe rather to tranſlate; *Worſhipping the Creature in Conjunction with the Creator*: For never was *Medium cultus Divini.* Παρὰ τὴν κτίσαντα *Juxta apud.*

Vol. III. was there ſuch a thing in the World, as worſhiping the Creature above the Creator; but worſhipping the Creature in conjunction with the Creator: And this fits the Idolatry both of the *Gentile* World, and of the *Jews*, and is continued in the *Romiſh Church* to this Day, in their uſe of Images. The *Jews* made a Calf, which though the Text calls ſo in contempt, it was the Reſemblance of an Angel. They would have ſomething that ſhould make Divine Repreſentation, that ſhould be to them as *Moſes* was. Can any one think the *Jews* were ſo ſtupid and ſottiſh, as to think that it was the God that made Heaven and Earth, that they made with their Hands? or that their Calf brought them out of *Egypt?* And it is not reaſonable to imagine the Heathen World did otherwiſe. But the *Idolatry* of the World hath lain in the *mean of Worſhip*, not in the Object of Worſhip. The Idolatry of the World hath been this, without God's Warrant or the true Dictates of impartial Reaſon, to *confine the Deity* to be contained in ſome Material thing, or to raiſe ſome material Thing to *diſtribute Divine Influence:* And this is that that is prohibited in the ſecond Commandment, and is the Reaſon that it is Moral and Perpetual. And this is plain in the Text, and over and over again in this Chapter: And this is plainly in the Language of theſe Words, *not to glorifie God as God.*

Loco Moſis, non Dei.

Fourthly. For Men to *Degenerate* in the way of Wickedneſs, and Naughtineſs; in contradiction to the Nature of God, the Law of Right, and Dictates of Reaſon: And this is plainly in the 29th, 30th, and 31ſt. *Being filled with all Unrighteouſneſs, Fornication, Wickedneſs, Covetouſneſs, Maliciouſneſs; full of Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whiſperers, Back-biters, Haters of God, Deſpiteful, Proud, Boaſters, Inventers of evill Things, diſobedient to Parents, without Underſtanding, Covenant-breakers, without Natural*

tural Affection, Implacable, Unmerciful. They that are thus, put themſelves into an Incapacity to Glorifie God as God: For nothing is more inherent to the Nature of Man, nothing more Natural to him, nothing more expected by God, than that Man do obſerve and govern himſelf by the Law of his Nature and the Dictates of Right Reaſon. According to the Nature of God, according to the Principles of Righteouſneſs, and according to the Reaſon of things, theſe are Laws which are not controulable; and whoſoever daſheth himſelf againſt theſe Laws, or is in contradiction to them, he doth kindle in himſelf the Fuel of Tophet burning; which can never be put out, unleſs there be Repentance, and Reformation. For what have we to offer unto God? we have nothing to give to God; but herein we glorifie him, when we are *like him*, when we endeavour to be *that* in our Meaſure, that God is in excellency and fullneſs. For this is the Sum of Religion, when we imitate that which we Worſhip. Now all the ways of God are ways of Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Judgment; and if we are under the Divine influence, then the Fruit of the Spirit is in us, in all Goodneſs, and Righteouſneſs, and Truth. This is in ſome meaſure to exhibit God, by imitating him; and this is the true explication of *God's doing all for his own Glory*, when he doth, in the Government of the World, take care that Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth, have a univerſal Empire: And we do that that is for the Glory of God, when we do that that is Right, and Good, and Juſt, and Fit, and are ſubordinate in our Sphere to the Acts of God in the Government of the World. It is too narrow and Childiſh a conceit, to think that God doth all for his own Glory, as we do for our ſelves. But God takes care that in the whole Creation, Truth and Righteouſneſs, and Juſtice and Equity take place: And this is the Genuine Explication

Diſc. XXI.

φιλοσοφία ἐστὶν ὁμοίωσις Θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δύνατον ἀνθρώ.

cation of *God's doing all for himself*: Not that it is possible for God to receive any thing, either from Man or Angel. So this is to glorifie God, to Resemble him, and to be that in our proportion, which he is in fullness: Then we act for the Glory of God, when we set our selves in a way of subordination, to serve those glorious Ends of Goodness, Righteousness, and Truth. None dishonour God more than those, who by Degeneracy pass into a Nature contrary to his; that do such Actions, that God doth set himself to discountenance in the World. Let us therefore rectifie our Apprehensions in this great Truth, of *God's doing all for himself*: That is, God doth take care that those things that are according to his Nature, and according to his Mind and Will, may be done in the World: And whosoever do not endeavour to have their Nature reconciled to these Laws, these Men do not glorifie God as God. No sort of Sacrifice is acceptable to God, where naughtiness is in the Heart, and Wickedness in the Life, and Practise: The Prayer of the Wicked is an abomination to the Lord.

Fifthly and *Lastly*. Which I take from the next Words, *being unthankful*; and truly had I said nothing, now I should have said enough: To have worthy Thoughts of God, and to be well affected toward him, is the Sum of our Devotion: And I look upon this to be an Explication of the first Part of the Verse. For he that is truly *Thankful* to God, will certainly *Glorifie him as God*: For since we are so much beholden to him; since we owe so much to Divine Goodness and Kindness, and are so unable to make a Recompence; there is all the Reason in the World, we should make Acknowledgment. And indeed Thankfulness and Obedience are our truest Sacrifice. And these are acceptable to God, and available on our behalf, *Psal.* 50. 23. This is an eminent piece of that Worship we call Imploration

Galen de usu partium.

(or

(or *Invocation*) of God. Three things make proper Prayer matter; which if a Man keep too, and keep from Repeating, he cannot pray to loſs. *First*, Confeſſion of Sin, and deſire of Pardon. And truly if Men live the lives of Chriſtians, they will not have the ſame Sins to confeſs the next Time. The *Second* thing in Prayer, which is proper Prayer-matter, is an Acknowledgment of our Dependance upon God, with a ſenſe of our own Weakneſs and Influence, with deſires of Gods Direction, Influence, Grace and Aſſiſtance: And this is the great Matter of Prayer, and for this we come to God every day. And this is buſineſs for us, at our going into the World. And the *Third* thing is the Reſentment of God's Goodneſs, and Faithfulneſs to us, and Thankfulneſs for it. By the two former, we daily fetch from God: By the third (which is our Reſentment and Thankfulneſs) by this only we bring to God; and this is our only Return, a grateful Senſe, and Apprehenſion of the various Effects of Divine Providence over us, averting evil from us, and conferring good upon us. This, as it expreſſes ingenuity of Spirit toward God, ſo it is the beſt we have in our Hands to bring to God: This one thing we have; and we have but this one thing that we call our own: God hath made us to have one thing that we may call our own; and yet, to prevent miſtake, I do acknowledge it is the Grace of God with us; and that one thing is the *conſent of our Minds*. Now, that we may be thankful, let us afford God the conſent of our Minds, and make him ours, by our own voluntary Acts; make him our delight and choice, take pleaſure, content and ſatisfaction in him: and this is the fulleſt and higheſt way of Thankfulneſs to God that we are capable of; out of a ſence of his Excellency and Goodneſs, to reckon all our Happineſs to conſiſt in our Disc. XXI.

enjoyment of him, in our being and living in communion and acquaintance with him.

Thus have I given you an account of this great *Failure*, and grand Miscarriage, *They glorified not God as God, neither were Thankful.* Now I proceed to the *Second* thing I observed at first, the Argument of conviction. Here is the Aggravation, if Men do not glorifie God as God, they do it *knowingly.* Man knowing that he hath a Creator, of Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; he doth not regard him, obey him, love him, chuse him, and delight in him: And this is that that Aggravate it upon a four fold account.

First. Truth is a *Seminal Principle*, with which the Mind of Man being impregnated, should bring forth; and here should be neither Barrenness, nor any Abortion. For the Rational Nature is as Proportionable to its Effects, as any vital Principal whatsoever in the World. We should cry out a Prodigy and a Monster, if Natural Principles should not Produce their Effects. I testifie, that when God made a Rational Creature, he made a Creature more Proportionable to the Effects of Reason, and so to Religion, than when he made any Natural Principle in the World: And if a Man do not walk up to the Principle of Reason, he is a Monster. Truth received into the Mind by Knowledge, is to the Soul as Leaven to Meal, which presently Leavens the whole Lump. It is as Natural, that Will should follow, as that Understanding should go first. Truth in the Understanding, without Practice, is God's Talent wrapped up in a Napkin. God doth Illuminate the Intellectual World of Spirits by Influence and Communication of himself, not to less purpose sure, than in Order to Act. Every one, so far as he knows, or may know; hath a Talent committed to his Trust; God doth expect Use, and Improvement. No such Argumen

gument of Conviction, as for Men *not to be that they know they ought to be; or not to do that they know they should.* Whereſoever God, who is the Father of Light and God of Truth, ſends his Rays and Beams into the Souls of Men; there he expects the Mind ſhould be purified as well as Enlightened. Dil. XXI.

Secondly. The impriſoning or controuling of Truth, is an Action of Injury and Offence beyond what we can eaſily imagine. He that ſtifles or goes againſt any Notion of his Mind, he gives a Check to God's working with him; and diſcharges God from all further Action. For it is declared, that God's *works in us, to Will and to Do:* Now for us, thus to do, is to Reject him, where we moſt find him and feel him; and to ſtrike at the very Image of God within our ſelves. And in this caſe, it is Wiſdom's Complaint *Pro.* 1. I have ſtretched out my Hands, I have invited you, *I have called* upon you; and *you would none of my Counſel.* This is that that will ſink Men into ruin at the great Day, that God on his Part was not wanting; but Men were Wilful. This is condemnation, that we know better, than either we are or do. Now what would this naughty Diſpoſition of Heart againſt God carry Men out to, if they had any Power and Opportunity againſt God? He that hath ſpite againſt that of God that is within him, would not he riſe up againſt God himſelf, if he had Power and Opportunity? Where the Truth of God is inwardly diſguſted, or diſreliſhed, ſo as not to be concocted and turned into a Spiritual Nouriſhment, there is an exaſperate and implacable Spirit againſt God himſelf. Eph. 2. 13.

Thirdly. Truth is *con-natural* to Man's Soul; the Light is not more con-natural to our bodily Eyes. Truth is as natural to Man's Soul, as Light to the Sun. And Truth in conjunction with a Man's Mind, doth become the Temper of a Man's Mind, and eſtabliſheth a Conſtitution; and therefore ought

to be kindly uſed. What Health is to the Body, that Truth is to the Soul; the former makes Men ſtrong and vigorous, the latter clears the ſight, and cures all the Infirmities of the Mind. What Obſtructions are to the Body, that Contradictions to the Reaſon of the Mind, are to the Intellectual Life. If what we Eat and Drink be not firſt ſubdued by the Power of Nature, and then conveyed to the ſeveral Parts of the Body for their ſubſiſtance, *it* becomes Matter of Diſeaſe. Now Knowledge *is the* Food of the Soul, and therefore we are not ultimately to reſt in Knowledge; but that that is Knowledge in the Mind and Underſtanding, ſhould in Life and Converſation, produce obedience. For we begin by Knowledge, and end in Practice: And indeed Truth, and that that follows upon Truth, is the ſelf-ſame thing materially, only called by ſeveral denominations in reſpect to different habitudes and diſtinct Functions and purpoſes. Truth is Knowledge in reſpect of the Underſtanding, Goodneſs in a Man's Heart, *&c.* Underſtanding is not finally enlightned for it ſelf; but as the Eyes receive Light for uſe and ſervice, guidance, direction of the Body. Again, the Stomach in the Body Natural receives all, but it retains not upon its own account; it receives to prepare, and then to diffuſe prepared matter to the other Parts of the Body. Juſt ſo the Underſtanding receives things, and diſcuſſes them; but then they are to have their Influence upon Life and Practice. *Firſt*, the Underſtandiug ſatisfies it ſelf in the Reaſon of things, then the Will gives conſent, and the Notion forthwith becomes matter of Action, Life, and Practice. The Underſtanding, as it comes into the World, the Philoſophers tell us, is as *Raſa tabula*, or a *white Sheet of Paper*, whereon nothing is writ; but when it doth receive Notions of Truth, it is then Beautified with Ornaments, beyond the Beauty of *Solomon in all his Glory*; or, as our

our Saviour ſaith, the tranſcendant Comelineſs of the Lilly; ſuch is the Underſtanding when it is illuminated: Truth, it is Glory, Light and Beauty to the Soul; it makes the Face of the Soul to ſhine and to appear fair and beautiful. It is the Soul's companion, with which ſhe doth Aſſociate herſelf with great Complacency and delight. But on the contrary, as one ſhut up in a Dungeon of Darkneſs and Naſtineſs, ſo is one who is in a State of Ignorance, or hath his Mind depraved by Vice. Ignorance and Vice ſtupifie and deaden the Mind. There are four miſchiefs from *Darkneſs*. *Firſt*, It hinders Motion: no Man knows where to put his Foot next, when in the dark. *Secondy*. It puts Men in Danger of falls, and knocks. *Thirdly*. It ſpoils any Man's Modeſty: *No Man bluſheth in the Dark*. *Fourthly*. It makes Men ſlaviſh and fearful. But Light hath all contrary advantages; It *directs* a Man in his way; it gives a Man *ſecurity*; for it diſcovers any thing that is Dangerous. It maintains the Minds *Modeſty* and Ingenuity. And then they go on *confidently* that know the way, they go the Ground they ſtand upon. Now Light is not more Natural to our Bodily Eyes, than Truth is to our Souls. There is nothing doth make any thing in this material World ſo deformed, as Ignorance and Vice do deprave and diſhonour the intellectual Nature. By this Men from Men do differ, as God doth differ from the Devil. For he that is ſottiſhly Ignorant, or depraved by Vice, is an Apoſtate, ſinks below himſelf, hath deformed himſelf, and is become truly Diabolical. Diſc. XXI.

Fourthly. As it is moſt unſafe, ſo it is a moſt *uneaſie* condition, to any Perſon to know, and not to do; to know, and not to be: To have Judgment of Right, and Conſcience of Iniquity. I fear no worſe Hell in the World to come. A Man hath not a Soveraignty over his Judgment; but he muſt Judge and Believe where he ſees cauſe and Reaſon. *If I can ſhew a Man a Reaſon*,

Vol. III. and an Argument, *I will convince his Judgment against his Will.* *Elihu* in the Book of *Job*, expreſſes to the Life this notion, how the notions of a Man's Mind do Command and Over-rule him. *Job* 32. 18. *I am full of matter* (ſaith he) *the Spirit within me conſtraineth me. Behold my Belly is as Wine which hath no Vent, it is ready to burſt like new Bottles. I will ſpeak that I may be refreſhed, I will open my Lips and anſwer.* Were it in a Man's Power, to believe as he would, he would be too hard for the greateſt Puniſhment that God can lay upon him: But it is not within a Man's Power to believe as he will. Men may by horrid Practices, provoke God to leave them, and give them up to a reprobate ſenſe, and to their own Hearts Luſts; but till Men come to that, they are greatly unquiet, and uneaſy. They that are Sinners, we know not their inward Perplexities: We little think how little true ſelf-enjoyment they have: It is as eaſy to carry Fire in our Boſom, and not be burnt, as to offer violence to Truth within our ſelves, and not be in a State of ſelf-condemnation.

And this for the account of the Argument of *Conviction.* I ſhall proceed in the next, to ſhew how it come to paſs that ſuch a thing that is ſo horrid and unnatural, is found in the Common-wealth of Man-kind, when as there is nothing of this Deformity in all Inferiour Natures.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXII.

The unnatural Ingratitude of the Profane and Irreligious

ROM. 1. 21.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.

I Have given you an Explication of this Form of Words, and have made some Explication of this *Thankfulness*; which is a duty to God, wherein we express our selves most naturally. For our truest Notion of God is, that he is the *first and chiefest Good*: And because we are by his Communication, and live by his Influence, therefore it is most Natural for Man to make returns. Now here is the Aggravation, if Men *do not glorifie God*, they do it *knowingly*: Man knowing that he hath a Creator of Infinite Wisdom, Power, and Goodness; he doth not regard him, obey him, love him, choose him, delight in him; and this I have made appear in these Particulars. *First*. Because Truth is a Seminal Principle; Rational Natures are far more sufficient for things of Reason, than Inferiour Natures to their Effects. *Secondly*. Because the *Imprisoning of Truth* is an Action of the highest Offence to God, that a Man can possibly commit. *Thirdly*. Truth is connatural to a Man's Soul; so that Truth being in conjunction with a Man's Mind, establisheth a con-

Dis. XXII.

Vol. III. ſtitution there. And *Fourthly.* As it is the moſt unſafe ſo it is the moſt *uneaſie* to any Perſon whatſoever; to know and not to be; to know and not to do. But for this I refer you to what I have ſaid more at large.

The next thing I promiſed, is to ſhew you *how it comes to paſs*, that ſuch a thing that is ſo horrid and Unnatural, is found in the Commonwealth of Mankind; when as there is nothing of this Deformity in all Inferiour Natures. An account of this in four Particulars.

Firſt. The leaſt that is to be ſaid in the caſe is this, a great part of Men live in a hurry, and have not the *Leiſure* to conſider. 'Tis a common ſaying, *haſte makes waſte:* Many would do better, if they did but ſtay and adviſe; but in haſte they do what is next. Unleſs a Man ſometimes take himſelf out of the World by retirement and ſelf-reflection, he will be in danger of loſing himſelf in the World; he will have very poor enjoyment of himſelf, or uſe of his Powers and Faculties, eſpecially as to Spiritual Acts wherein he is moſt concerned: Becauſe things ſeverally conſidered are within the compaſs of Lawful, therefore we do not doubt or fear; whereas altogether they ſnatch us from our Principles. Men will not be engaged in that that is not honeſt to be done; but let Men conſider, that the things ſeverally may be matters of Lawful Employment, yet too many of them crouded together may ſnatch a Man away from himſelf and the ſervice of God. Therefore *the Lord's day* is of very great uſe and advantage to us; it does us this Courteſie, to ſtave Company and Buſineſs off, that ſo we may be at leiſure to think of God, and to perform acts of Worſhip and Devotion toward him. If we have good Minds, our ſafety for Eternity is of ſuch conſequence and importance, that we ſhould think it highly neceſſary, that there ſhould be an interpoſure of calm and quiet. It is very

very unſafe for Eternity, to go out of the World in a hurry and confuſion. Be not always in Buſineſs, and too much in Company, but ſometimes retired, to look inward and to think of God. This is the *firſt* account I give you, how it comes to paſs that Men do not purſue their Knowledge to Practice. Disc. XXII.

Secondly. Men are given up in the firſt place to ſave themſelves *harmleſs* in this hurtful and dangerous World. Maſter favour thy ſelf, *Mat.* 16. 22. *Be it far from the Lord; this ſhall not be unto thee.* St. *Peter*, who might have undone himſelf, and all the World beſide, if this Council had been followed. A very great Man of this our Nation hath affirmed, that it is dangerous to follow Hiſtory too cloſe at the Heels: So in this caſe, he that follows Truth to cloſe at the Heels, may chance to have his Teeth ſtruck out. Truth may carry us into contention, where other Mens Principles agree not with ours: For Truth allows no baſe compliance with Fancy, Luſt, or Humour, but requires us to keep in the way, and to walk in it with all ſimplicity, ſincerity, plaineſs, and open-heartedneſs: We muſt neither deſert, or betray Truth, to open to our ſelves a way to eſcape; but a Man muſt maintain his Truth, ſo that obſervers may Rectifie themſelves, comparing themſelves with him, and ſo finding out how far they have departed from Rectitude. But as the World goes, a Man of impartial Truth, and Uprightneſs may chance to be laid aſide as Moroſe, and Cinical. *Plutarch* diſtinguiſheth between a Friend and a Flatterer. The former ſtands as ſteady as an Oak; the Flatterer accomodates himſelf to Humour and Fancy, applauds all deeds and ſayings. Now this that I have ſaid is to be underſtood of the undoubted Principles of Sobriety and Juſtice: For (ſaving conſcience in theſe caſes) pleaſe every Body, make the beſt of any Body, go as far with them as you can, and live

Sir *W. Rawleigh.*

Plutarch Quomodo poſcit Adulator, &c.

live in Universal Reconciliation with the whole Creation of God. For all civility, affability, and courtesie, all expressions of Modesty, all effects of Love and Universal good-will, are Evangelical, and highly Divine, *Rom.* 12. 10. *Rom.* 13. 17. 1 *Tim.* 5. 17. 1 *Pet.* 3. 7.

Thirdly. Men gratifie their *Senses* and steep themselves in Worldly Delights and Pleasures. Sensuality makes the Palate of the Soul so dull and gross, that it cannot perceive what is true and Judicious. That that is sincere and true Wisdom, is not in the way of Epicurism; but in the way of Sobriety and Temperance. Knowledge (which is an Intellectual dainty) will not be relished, unless the Soul be purified by Mortification and Abstinence, and by separation from gross matter, and from sense, 1 *Tim.* 5. 6. *James.* 5. 5. 2 *Pet.* 2. 13. 2 *Tim.* 3. 4. *Tit.* 3. 3. *Hebr.* 11. 25. Men grow less by steeping themselves in Worldly sense, and brutish and Carnal Pleasures. The sensualist is no capable Recipient, nor meet discerner of Divine and Spiritual Truth.

τὸ ἀληθὲς οὐ τὸ εἰλικρινὲς.

Anima sicca est Anima prudens.

Ἡ δὲ σπαταλῶσα ζῶσα τέθνηκε. 1 Tim. 5. 6.

Fourthly. By long *Abuse* of themselves Men come into a Temper that is wholly Unnatural. 'Tis a sad Representation in *Isaiah*, Isa. 6. 9, 10. verses. *Go and tell this People, hear ye indeed, but understand not, and see ye indeed but perceive not. Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand with their Heart, and convert and be healed.* All desperate cases refer to this: You have it six times referred to in the New Testament, *Math.* 13. 14. *Mark* 4. 12. *Luke* 8. 10. *John* 12. 40. *Acts* 28. 26. And *St. Paul.* referrs to it in *Rom.* 11. 8. It is most certain, *We have our selves, as we use our selves.* He that wholly lives downward, the longer he lives the more confined Soul he will have. Every Man is, for his Intellects and for his Principles, according

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ing as he doth accuſtom himſelf. No Man knows what he may be brought unto by ill uſe, cuſtom and Practice. The firſt baſe act is a *force to a Man's ſelf*; he doth it with diſſatisfaction, and doth apprehend he doth himſelf wrong. *Innocence is a great Protection:* But the coming in of Sin, is like the breaking in of Water; if once it have found the way over, it bears down all before it. Hence we do obſerve, that no Man at the firſt is the worſt: But he brings himſelf to it by havocking Conſcience, confounding his Principles, and putting away all the Modeſty and Ingenuity of his Nature. In this caſe (which is the worſt of caſes) I am now at the higheſt Degeneracy incident to humane Nature. But if this be any Man's caſe; this muſt be the Recovery; there muſt be a Reſtauration by Regeneration, that the Faculties of the Soul may be reſtored to their proper Operations and Functions: And ſo by continuance in ſome good exerciſe, they may hope by Repentance, to be brought back again to ſome diſcerning of Good and Evil. For Repentance is for Recovery: And this is the only way. We do not know the length of God's Patience; he hath forgiven great Sinners: They therefore that have thus abuſed themſelves, and have wrought out the Modeſty of their Natures, by violent uſe, ill cuſtom and practice; and wrought themſelves into an Unnatural State; by entring upon, and continuance in ſome good Exerciſe, let them hope (by Repentance) to be brought back again to ſome diſcerning of Good and Evil: And this is the only way for their Recovery.

Diſc. XXII.

Nemo Repente fit Turpiſſimus.

Thus have I ſhewed you *how it comes to paſs*, that Men do that that is ſo Unnatural, as not to comply in matters of Knowledge, than which a Man cannot do an Action of greater force againſt himſelf, and his Natural Principles. I now come to make four *Inferrences* upon the whole.

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In the *first* place, then we ſee the *courſe of this World*; and by it, we may eaſily *Forſee* the State of Men in the *other World*. For let Men but anſwer me in theſe three Points. *Firſt*. Can they look God in the Face hereafter with any comfort, who here liked not to retain the knowledge of God in their Minds? Let a Man uſe but his Reaſon. Can he with expectation deſire to look *God in the Face*, in the other World, who in this State, the State of Probation, doth not at all affect to retain God in his Mind? *Secondly*. Can they look for any *Reward* from him, in the future State, who do not at all ſet themſelves to Glorifie him as God in this, neither are Thankful. Can any expect wages, who have done no work? They cannot expect that God ſhould bring them to Honour hereafter, that have not ſet themſelves to Glorifie God here. *Thirdly*. Will not the iſſue of holding Truth in Unrighteouſneſs, contradicting the Reaſon of our Minds, forcing our own Judgment, making havock of Conſcience? Will not the iſſue of this be Confuſion and Aſtoniſhment? What can a Man look for, when he is not True to himſelf; when he hath every thing within himſelf riſing up againſt him? This cannot but end in Confuſion and Aſtoniſhment. For things hold a proportion one to another; force in one way, brings on force in another way. So that the buſineſs of the Day of Judgment may, without the Spirit of Prophecy, be fairly foreſeen; may be here accounted for, by things of this State. Men will be then left to receive the Fruit of their own ways; and Men cannot think that things will finally prove otherwiſe, if they have at any time in their lives, taken to themſelves liberty to think with Reaſon. But if Men will preſume, and content themſelves with bare Imagination, Men may Flatter themſelves and go on in a way of Stupidity. But if ever they be ſerious, and conſider, and uſe

Reaſon

Reaſon at all, they will foreſee in an evil frame of Spirit, and in a Wicked and Naughty courſe of Life, they will foreſee future Miſery. Men may indeed careleſly non-attend, or groſly neglect themſelves, or divert themſelves to think of other things; but for any Rational hopes or expectations, they can have none, unleſs they can believe any thing, Abſurdities, inconſiſtencies, contradictions, and impoſſibilities. No Huſbandman can expect a Crop in Harveſt, but according to the Seed he ſows. No Man that is in a Spirit Oppoſite to God, Goodneſs, and Truth, can expect to be happy in any enjoyment of God in a future State. Let us at leaſt ſometime of our Life be ſerious, and in good earneſt. Let us apart and out of the World, aſk our ſelves but this ſingle Queſtion (when the guize of the World doth not dazle our Eyes.) Will this end well? will this courſe of Life bring me to Happineſs? It is a thouſand Pities that Men ſhould employ Mind and Underſtanding only in the Drudgeries of this Life. This is my firſt Obſervation. From what is done and acted in the preſent State, a Man may *Foreſee* his Circumſtances in the future State. Diſ. XXII.

Secondly. As hereby we have foreſight of the future State of Man, ſo we have here alſo an Account of the *Torture*, Confuſion, and Diſtraction, at leaſt at times and Seaſons, of ſome that are high Sinners in this Life: Hell kindled in Mens Conſciences; Hell-fire flaſhing in Mens Faces; as it were Hell on this ſide Hell. They do conceive within themſelves, things that are unnatural, and monſtrous: They have more Knowledge of God, than Love and Affection for him: They have more Light in their Minds than Life in their Souls: By Knowledge one way, by Affectation another way. Theſe Men; they then muſt be, when a-part and by themſelves, in a tortured and confounded condition,

dition, when they do conſider. They have within themſelves, things that are monſtrous and unnatural; things that are Upſtarts and Traitors to Humane Nature: Luſts, Humour, Will, Paſſion; and where theſe have diſpoſſeſſed the inbred Sovereign; where theſe have uſurped the Government, and dethroned Reaſon, what a State will here be? For none of theſe, Luſt, Humour, Will, Paſſion, were made to govern; but were to be regulated. But where Men will, becauſe they will; where Men live by Humour, and in Paſſion; and Luſt hath Dominion over them; here Reaſon is dethroned: And theſe Men muſt needs be in a State of great Confuſion, becauſe there is ſo much of Diſorder within them. No Society in the World ſo diſtempered and confounded, as this little Common-wealth of Man in this Caſe. 'Tis as *Acts* 21. 30, 31. But now Reaſon is uniform, and the Dictates of Reaſon, are ſatisfactory to a Man, and calmly guide a Man: But Luſt, Will, Humour, and Paſſion, theſe are Incendiary Principles. Wherefore we obſerve that Perſons of bad Lives, and ill Conſciences, do not love to be alone; rather in any Company than alone by themſelves: Rather in any Employment, than in the Action of Self-reflection. Few Men would envy thoſe Mens Conditions, notwithſtanding they may be attended with ſome worldly good Circumſtances, if they were but acquainted with their inward Ails; the Tortures and Vexations of their Minds. It is obſerved concerning *Tiberius* the *Roman* Emperour, That being conſcious to himſelf of horrid Wickedneſſes, he could have no Compoſure of Mind; all Divertiſements would not do; inſomuch that the Senate adviſe him to leave Buſineſs, and try the Country; but he writes back thus. If all the Deities that ever Mortals acknowledged, ſhould conſpire to torment a Man, it would not amount to half

Tacitus, Annal L. 6.

half ſo much as my own inward perplexity. Inward Perplexity, and Confuſion of Mind and Thoughts, occaſioned by guilt of Conſcience, and naughtineſs of Mind, tranſcend all the Tortures of Gout or Stone; of which Men have ſuch dreadful Apprehenſion. *The Spirit of a Man can bear his Infirmity; but a wounded Spirit who can bear?* What hath a Man either to direct him, or uphold him, or comfort him, when he hath not the Reaſon of his own Mind on his ſide? They are Ignorant Perſons therefore, and in a miſtake, that do repreſent the ways of Religion to be Melancholly. No: There alone is Hearts-eaſe. The Reaſon why Men live ſo unquietly, that are out of the compaſs of Religion, is, becauſe they entertain in themſelves, things that are ſo unnatural. As Violence in the World Natural is attended by Conflagration; ſo in the World Moral, it is attended with Exaſperation and Fury. This was the Caſe of *Judas*; he cou'd not live, tho' his covetous Humour was ſatisfied, and he had that that was his Bargain; yet he could not enjoy it. He that is in a wicked way, his Wit will not ſerve him to the laſt Run. This you have as a foreſight into the future State; ſo an *Account* how it comes to paſs, that ſome Men have ſo much of Hell in their own Conſciences. Dis. XXII. Pro. 18. 14.

Thirdly. We are to have *God excuſed*, notwithſtanding his Judgments ſeem in the World to be ſometimes ſevere and ſharp. There are Sins of Men, that are higher in the rank of Sins, than any Judgments of God in this State are great in order of puniſhment. For there are Sins in this State, that a Man in reaſon would imagine that they muſt of neceſſity go beforehand to Judgment, upon account of God's Honour, and for the maintenance of Righteouſneſs. Alſo conſider; They who lie under the greateſt Violence in this World

World, ſuffer more from their own Conſciences, than from God's Judgments: They ſuffer more from within, than they ſuffer under the immediate Hand of God. And this I will demonſtrate thus. The moſt intolerable Suffering in the World, is to ſuffer as a guilty Perſon, a Malefactor; becauſe he is privy to his own Iniquity, and he is not true to himſelf. He hath the Reaſon of his own Mind againſt him, and ſuffers the Torments of his own Breaſt. Now the worſt that any can ſuffer, ſaving this, is only to ſuffer without, and not within. He ſuffers either for a good Cauſe, or upon an unavoidable Neceſſity; under Power not to be reſiſted; being in no Demerit or Contradiction to the Reaſon of the Mind: which is Comfort enough to him to oppoſe to his Sufferings. Therefore we ſhould not fly in the Face of God, nor challenge him for his Judgments in the World. For the Judgments of God are very tolerable, if we be not guilty. Guilt is that that makes a Man's Heart ake: The moſt that Judgments do, is to awaken ſleepy Conſciences, and make Mens Conſciences to bite them: It is a touchy angry Buſineſs, *that* that we call *Noli me tangere.* The Judgments of God are nothing, in compariſon of the Guilt that lies upon Mens Conſciences. Wherefore it is very true, *Thy Deſtruction is of thy ſelf.* Wherefore, O Man, whoſoever thou art who ſuffereſt, wouldſt thou effectually eaſe thy Condition, I adviſe thee do theſe two things: Put thy ſelf upon Self-examination, and the motion of Repentance. The motion of Repentance will quite alter the Caſe, and all the World cannot give thee eaſe, ſave in this way. For this is the great Goſpel-Grace, that Repentance ſhould prove effectual; that it ſhould be otherwiſe with a Sinner that repents, than with a Sinner that doth not repent: For where we condemn our ſelves, God will forbear. Upon a

Tormenta proprii pectoris.

Hoſ. 13. 9.

Moral

Moral Conſideration, the Man is not the ſame: For after Repentance, the Man is paſſed into another Spirit, and there is another Law of his Life. I dare ſay, without Repentance, a Sinner could not be eaſed in his own Mind. If he have offered Force to himſelf, in reſpect of his own Principles, he cannot have content in his own Mind, tho' God ſhould withdraw and take his Hand off. There is no poſſibility of Eaſe to a guilty Conſcience, unleſs a Man do repent. If a Man upon Self-reflection, out of a diſlike of the Evil of the thing; if he do blame himſelf for doing of it, do all he can to avoid it, and recall it by Repentance; and deprecate God for Forgiveneſs; he doth morally revoke, and, in effect, blot out the Line which before he had written. Dis. XXII.

Fourthly. I alſo infer, That Knowledge ſhould never be *obſtructed*; but have a free Paſſage; that what is Truth ſhould eſtabliſh in us a Frame and Temper of Spirit; give way to Truth; let it overpower, prevail and conquer. If a Man do not thus, he cannot ſecure his Peace in the World.

I will now, in the cloſe of all, add this ſerious *Exhortation.*

Since therefore there is nothing ſo Natural to Reaſon, as to take Cognizance of God, ſince Mind and Underſtanding in Man are a peculiar Faculty to that purpoſe; my Exhortation is, that every Man would take care of this, that is the main; To take Cogniſance of God in the World, and to glorifie him as God. And ſince he is beholden to God for all he hath in the World, that he would be thankful to him. If I know there is a God, what things are then included? Then all Reverence, all Regard, all Duty, all Obſervance of him. If I know there is a God, then all Faith, Affiance, Adherence, Truſt, and Confidence in him.

Vol. III. If I know there is a God (and if he be God he is infinitely good. For the trueſt Norion we have of God is, that he is the firſt and chiefeſt Good:) Then Love and Affection toward him, Joy and Delight in him; and above all things, to take care to pleaſe him, and approve my ſelf to him; and to do every thing in ſubſerviency, nothing in contradiction to his Will. Now all this is founded upon this innate Senſe that we have of God, or the poſſibility there is to come to know there is a God, by our own Being, and the Being of the Reſidue of our Fellow-Creatures. Now we have a great advantage in things of the Mind, that we do not waſte them by the uſe of them; but we do improve them: The more we uſe them, the more they are our own, and the greater they are in Stock: The more a Man thinks, the nobler are his Thoughts: The further a Man enquires, the fuller will be his Underſtanding: And to teach another, is to make the thing more our own. It is not ſo in Materials: But here it is, *uſe, and have.* Wherefore he that is arrived to this Knowledge, he is highly concerned: For go back he cannot: If he goes back, he runs into Self-condemnation; ſo that go on he muſt, or elſe he had better never have begun; and his beginning will be loſt. *He* Luk. 9.62. *who hath put his Hand to the Plough, muſt not draw back.* And indeed this I reckon to be the Apoſtacy of the World, reſiſting of Knowledge, to fail in a due compliance with known Truth: That we do not comply with the Reaſon of our Minds: That we do not do and execute according to the Principles of Mind and Underſtanding.

There is not that in the Chriſtian Religion, from which one who hath his Senſes able to diſcern, would be releaſed, or deſire a Diſpenſation. This is the Exhortation, and this is the Life of all the Diſcourſe: Let every Man know, he may if he will

will, be reſolved for certain, that there is a God: And then he is bound to walk in all good Conſcience; then ought he to affect to be that in his Meaſure and Degree, that God is in his Fulneſs. This is the Settlement of our Religion: This is a great Engagement upon us to live up to the Rule of Righteouſneſs.

Laſtly, To conclude the Point. I would have this Text read in the Ears of every Man that pretends to be an *Atheiſt*. He muſt either deny the Authority, or be ſelf-condemned. And for the Conviction of this ſuppoſed Atheiſt, I affirm two things in the Words. *Firſt*, what the Apoſtle doth ſuppoſe, as formerly aſſerted. *Secondly*, How he doth deſcribe, explicate, and declare the Caſe.

Firſt. What he doth *ſuppoſe*, as formerly aſſerted, That God made Man to know that he is. Then the Atheiſts Opinion is againſt his own Maker. He may better believe that he himſelf is not, than that there is not a God.

Secondly. How he doth deſcribe, explicate and declare the Caſe. Here you have the Atheiſts Temper and Eſtate; not purſuing his Knowledge, not carrying it out to its proper Effect of *glorifying God*, and being *thankful*: He *becomes vain in his Imagination*; nothing is ſincere or true that he thinks. For this is certain, that Divine Truth is ſo noble a thing, that whereſoever it is entertained, all things will be conformable to it, or Men will be made deſperate. *Their fooliſh Heart was darkened*. He is become a Fool, and hath wrought himſelf into Darkneſs. He that affects to be an Atheiſt; it is thus declared concerning him, if he put away the Senſe of God, expect then, that he ſhould become *vain in his Imagination, and that his fooliſh Heart will be darkened: Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became Fools*. He may pretend to be very witty,

to free himself from all Obligations of Conscience; to be loose in the World, and serve his own Lusts; But it is Madness and Folly.

Now Atheists are of two sorts; by *Self-neglect*: Or by *Contempt of God.*

1. There are many of the *former* sort; for so all they are that *live without God in the World*: *God far from their Reins.* So those that are Drudges in the World, who make themselves very *Gibeonites*, to hew Wood and draw Water: These Men sink themselves below their Species, ascend not to the Perfection of Humane Action, they never do that that is most proper and Specifick: For I account *nothing is more Specifick to Man than Capacity of Religion, and sense of Deity.* But these Men do wholly live, to seek for Food, and for Rayment: They live like Beasts; they Grovel upon the Ground, and take what they find, never lifting themselves up to observe whence it comes. Too great a Number of Men are Atheists in this kind, in a Negative way; They never use Reason in *that* that is the Peculiar and Proper Act of Reason; but only to keep sense Company: They never take Cognisance of God, or do any acts of homage to him. Thus Men live every day to be less: Spend their time wholly about Worldly Business. These are the *Atheists by Neglect.*

Victum & vestitum quærere.

Secondly, You have the *Atheists by Contempt* of God. Now of these Men I can scarcely think that they do believe themselves: Yea, I am confident the Atheist of this kind, doth not believe himself at all times; unless his case be that which is the worst of cases. That God hath forsaken him, and delivered him up to *a reprobate sense*, and given him up to his own Hearts Lust. He that affects to be an Atheist, he doth at times, trouble himself for fear of that God whom he doth not love: He fears him, and hates him

him, and ſuſpects that he is; and would not have him to be. Unleſs it be the caſe of Reprobacy of Mind, and that is the worſt of States in this Life. I do not believe that he that is an Atheiſt thinks at all times that there is no God. This I could give good Proof of, that never did any in the whole Creation, *more fear and dread Deity and Death*, then thoſe that have been bold to *aſſert there was no God*; and wrought upon themſelves to think, that when they *Die*, they are *Annihilated*, and go out of being; and that all Principles of Nature come to nothing: Which ſhews that theſe Men ſin againſt an innate ſenſe of God, that is within themſelves. They are many times beaten by the Reaſon of their own Minds. By-ſtanders are not acquainted with the internal fears, jealouſies, ſuſpitions and Heart-akings; eſpecially at Retirements, of this kind of Atheiſts, leaſt there ſhould be a God, whom they deny; and an Exiſtence of the Soul after Death. As there is the fulleſt ſatisfaction in the World, in the inward ſenſe and feeling of Reconciliation with God, the Reaſon of things, the Rule of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth, a frame of Mind tinctured with Goodneſs, ſo there is the greateſt unquietneſs of Mind, where there is an internal diſplacency and Offence againſt the being of God; and where there is a deſire there ſhould be no God, and an Endeavour to think that all things are alike: The *former of theſe* hath all ſtrength for him; to wit, he that thinks and believes there is a God, and is in Reconciliation with him, and with the Reaſon of things, and the Rule of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth: For he thinks that he that is well able to do every thing, takes care of him; ſo that he needs not break his Heart with care, nor interrupt his Sleep: For whoſoever believes there is a God, and that he is the Original of our Being, he

Dif. XXII.

Vol. III. muſt needs think that we are Governed by his Providence. This Man thinks I muſt do my duty, 'tis true, but I am not primarily charged with my ſelf; that belongs to God. But now the *latter*, he doubts and fears uncertainly; he ſuſpects at times, that there is one that made and governs the World, and that he is engaged againſt him. And I do verily believe, that there is no Atheiſt, but at times, is in fears, and doubt and jealouſies, unleſs given up to a Reprobate ſenſe. And whereas this Atheiſt thinks that all things are alike and ſubject to Will, and Power; and if Power enough to carry a thing on, no ſcruple then (and this is that they deny God for, that it might be ſo; that all things might be in themſelves alike, he would take away the being of God: Becauſe this is the ſupream Law according to the Nature of God, according to the Rule of Right) but ſure he cannot but at times, think that it is better to be Sober, than intemperate; better to Gratifie and to do Good, than to be violent and furious. Now when he comes to think, that in his Fundamental Notion, there may be an Errour; then he cannot but think: Oh, what will become of me, that have taken upon me to remove the old Landmarks, and to controul the moſt famous Rights, the moſt eſtabliſhed Laws, thoſe things that all mortals do ſubſcribe to, and are Fundamental to the ſafety of the Univerſe! And I have taken upon me to vary from them, and to ſubordinate them to my Will and Humour: If all things be not alike, I am ruined to Eternity.

Thus far for an *Account* of the Natural Knowledge of God: And this you ſee is Antecedent to Faith, and Fundamental to all Acts of Devotion, Religion, and Conſcience: and whoſoever denies the being of God, he doth it for this end; he doth it that he may think according to the Reaſon of Things, all things are alike, and that if he

he hath but Power, he may do what he lists. But this Man, that thus hardens his Heart, since he hath Jealousie, Suspitions and fears, and sometimes suspects he may be mistaken; since so it is, we are engaged, as we would secure our present Composure of Mind, and future eternal welfare, effectually to entertain this great matter of Knowledge, *that there is a God*, and then that we are his Creatures, and that we are to observe him, take notice of him, obey him, love him, and delight in him. Dis. XXII.

DISCOURSE XXIII.

The miserable Degeneracy of Men through their Affectation of Atheism, and Practice of Wickedness.

ROM. 1. 21, 22.

Because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their Imaginations, and their foolish Heart was Darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became Fools.

Dis. XXIII. I Have often admonished you of what import in Religion, the *natural Knowledge of God* is, and have made it appear to you, that God hath made Man capable of knowing there is a God, and what are his Natural Perfections, in some Measure, by the Effects of Creation and Providence.

I will now superadd a little, and then dismiss this Point. If there were no other Argument in the World, to prove there is a God, a *Man is an Argument sufficient to himself*. For thus a Man feels that he is; and he doth prove that by his Acting: I act, therefore I am; I do, therefore I have being: And if I am, either I made my self, or was made by *another*. I did not make my self: For if I had made my self at my own will, I could continue my self in being during my own Pleasure; and this I know I cannot: And this is great Reason; because it is an exercise

exercise of less Power, to continue a thing in being which hath being; than to call a thing out of nothing, into being: Therefore I made not my self, but was made by another. And then that other must neither be my *Equal*, nor *Inferiour*: For I can do as much as my Equal, more than my Inferiour; therefore I was made by a *Greater* than my self, a Greater, both in Wisdom and Power: And this first Independant Being I call *God*. Thus *is a Man an Argument to himself, of the existence of a Deity.* This is the first point in all Religion, and that that is Fundamental to Conscience; which if it be acknowledged, all other things will follow. Here we do begin, and at the Day of Judgment God will make this out against his Creation; that he *made* every Intelligent, and Voluntary Creature capable of knowing that he is. Dis. XXIII.

Now that which makes Men who have put away Reason and Conscience, affect to be Atheists is, that they may be Arbitrary and unaccountable, and in Danger of no Power; and to this purpose they *first* think that there is no God; and *secondly* that there is no difference of things, but that Good and Evil, upon a Moral consideration, is wholly imaginary: If so, if these two things can be resolved on, then may they gratifie Sense, please their Lust and Humour, and not be self-condemned, nor be in danger of any Power, that will call them to an account. Then may Will, Lust, and Humour, Rule, and Reason stand by, and have nothing to gain-say. And this is Pleasure and Happiness to diseased, and exorbitant Minds; for now they may carry all before them. Then also if a Man can in the first Instance be an *Atheist*, he will easily in the next place be an *Infidel*: And then Christs condemning Sin in his Death, which is one of the greatest Arguments against Sin in the World. This will be looked upon as only a mad kind of Notion, a *fraud*

Fra

Pia, a thing contrived to keep Men in Obedience and a Restraint and Limitation to their Liberty: For if not one God, then neither one Mediator; and so, Natural, and Christian Religon will both fall to the Ground. Now against this, God hath made a double Provision; and it is as old as God's Creation, the security and hold that God hath upon Man. The *first* is Man's Capacity above all other Creatures in this visible World. For *Solomon* hath told us, the *Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, a thing that *hath Light, and gives Light: Lighted by God, and discovering God to Man.* And the Employment, and proper Business of Mind and Understanding is, to follow after God, and find him out in his Works, and to make acknowledgment to him of his Goodness; and this is the Employment and proper function of Mind and Understanding in Man. And it is Sacriledge in the highest Nature, for any one to sink down into the Employment of *Gibionites*, to Drudge in the World, and to take no notice of God, no Cognisance of him: And this is the *First Security* God hath taken against Atheism, *Man's Capacity.* Then *Secondly.* An Argument that God affords for Conviction, Assurance, and Satisfaction that there is a God is, the *visible Effects of God* in the World, that transcend Mans Power, Knowledge and Apprehension, how they come to be, or how they may be done. A Man knows the Effect of his own Power and Skill, what he can contrive; or bring to pass; and sees a thousand things in this visible World, that he can give no account of, he cannot so much as Imitate them. This must be an effect of an Intelligent Agent; and because they are so various, they must be the Effects of Infinite Goodness, Wisdom and Power: He cannot give an account of their Principles, their Make, their Existence, and Continuance, and therefore must acknowledge a Being of higher Understanding, and more

Prov. 20. 27.

Demonstratio a posteriori.

more plentiful Power and Goodness; because of his various communications. Had I one that was not a Christian in this Congregation, I could by this Argument command his assent, by thus proving the cause by the effect. Disc. XIII.

Now I have done with this great Point, and come to the sad and *dismal Consequences* that follow upon this *Affected Atheism*: *Because that when they knew God they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful*; There is the *Atheism*, And then, that that is the mediate Product and Consequence of this denying God, either by neglect, or Affectation, is *They became vain in their imagination, and their Foolish Heart was Darkened. Professing themselves to be wise they became Fools.* Now from hence I do observe this, that where there is not an honest Entertainment of the great Truths of Religion and Conscience; and a hearty Compliance with them, and a ready Obedience to them, but a failure in the Main and Principle Points of Life and Practice, there Men's pretences to Religion and Conscience, are subject to evaporate, and turn to a most miserable account, and come to nothing. This is plainly in the Text, where Men knowing there is a God *do not glorifie him as God*: Where Men *are not thankful*; therefore not sensible they are receivers: Where Men do *not like to retain God in their Minds*, which is the Atheists temper; where Men *do these things that are filthy, and take Pleasure in them that do so*, which is the Atheists Practice, it follows, they become *vain in their Imagination*, &c. Now *to glorifie God as God*, stands in these two things. *First*, to *own him* the General and Universal *Cause*. *Secondly*, To acknowledge him the first and chiefest *Goodness*. They that do not this, do *not glorifie God as God*. For he is not God if he be not a General and Universal Cause; and he is not God, if he be not the first and chiefest Goodness; *sine bonitate nulla Majestas*. To Divine Perfection

fection there is requisite, that to Wisdom and Power, there be also Goodness. Now those two things do comprehend these six things in them. *First*, Highly to Regard, Adore, and Reverence God. *Secondly*, Fully to submit to him, and depend upon his Pleasure, in all things. *Thirdly* to obey him, observe him, and perform his Will. *Fourthly*. To Love, and Delight in him. *Fifthly*. To be sensible of his free Communications, and Influence, and to be thankful. *Sixthly*. To make him the Centre of Rest to our Immortal Souls, and our last and ultimate End: and whosoever fails in these, doth *not glorifie God as God*. I will only say upon them all, that Irreverence and disrespect to that Being, on which we do depend for whatsoever we are, and have, is most Ununiform, Incongruous, Unequal and Disproportionate Carriages. This is our Perfection, who are by Communication and Participation, that we do imitate and resemble God: And the Sum of all Religion is *Divine Imitation*. Therefore nothing more inconsistent with Religion, than for any Man to have slight and foolish Apprehensions of God in his Mind. Nothing is more Ununiform nothing more Incongruous; a crooked Line not more different from a strait. The Primary Rules of good and evil, carries Reason with them, so immutable in the eternal connexion of their Terms, that that which doth destroy all things else Time, cannot abolish or destroy them, but they are Eternally so. It is an excellent Notion of *Aristotle's*: He observes, that what is Natural is immoveable, and all the World cannot hinder it. It is Natural for the Fire to burn, and therefore it burns wherever it is: It is Natural to the Sun to shine, therefore it constantly shines. So the same in the great Instances of Morality. It is every where Due and Necessary, to love God. If the Author of our Being, our Original, then wheresoever there is an Intelligent Agent endued

dued with Mind and Understanding capable of God, Ser. xxiii
he is under this indispensible Obligation of Regard, Adoration, and Reverence, of submission to God and dependance upon his Pleasure in all things, he is under the Obligation to obey him, observe him, and perform his Will; to love, and delight in him, to be sensible of his communications and influence, and to be Thankful. We are to make him the Centre of our Souls and our Last and Ultimate End. This is *Natural*, therefore it is immutable. We may not break the Rules of eternal Reason, to let loose our Power, to do whatsoever may be done, in contradiction to the most excellent Nature of God: I say, we may not break the Rule of eternal Reason, to let loose our Power, whether it be agreeable to the pure and excellent Nature of God, or not. *We can do that, which we can of right do*; but to Evil there is no power at all. We ought always to take cognisance what things are according to the Nature, Mind, and Will of God; and not to desire the contrary. So I bring you home to the main Point; That wheresoever there is not an honest Entertainment of the great Truths of Religion and Conscience, and a hearty Compliance with them, and a ready Obedience to them; such as is Reverence of Deity, Faith in him, Love and Affection to him, &c. But a Failure in the main and principal Points of Life and Practice; such as *not glorifying God as God*; nor affecting to retain the Knowledge of God in their Minds, there Men's pretences to Religion and Conscience are subject to evaporate, and come to nothing, and turn to a most miserable Account: As you have it in six Forms of Words. *They became vain in their Imagination. Their foolish Heart darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became very Fools. They change the Glory of* the All-glorious *God into an Image made like to corruptible Man. They change the*

Truth

Truth of God into a Lie. And worſhip the Creature together with the Creator. Theſe are Forms of Words that the Apoſtle hath in theſe, and the following Verſes of this Chapter: And all this is conſequent upon this *Affected Atheiſm*, of Alienating Mind and Underſtanding from obſervance of God: And this is the Point that lies before us. Wherefore it is a very great matter, *the ingenuous Uſage of Truth: To receive Truth in the love of it*; to receive it upon its own account, out of Jugment and Satisfaction of its Conveniency and Fitneſs to bring Humane Nature to Perfection; as we are wont to ſay, as a Characteriſtical Form of Words, *To act out of love to Righteouſneſs*: Not as the unjuſt Judge, of whom
Luk. 18. 2. our Saviour ſpeaks, *which feared not God, neither regarded Man*; yet to rid himſelf of the Trouble, he did the Woman Right: He did a thing materially Juſt; but not out of a Principle, not out of a Mind reconciled to Goodneſs and Truth. We are not to lay other Deſigns on Truth, not to practice upon it for other Ends: Not to put it in the place of a *Mean*, but in the place of an *End*; which the
Νομίζοντες πορισμὸν εἶναι τὴν εὐσέβειαν, Apoſtle reproves in 1 *Tim.* 6 *ch.* 5. *v. Men of corrupt Minds, and deſtitute of the Truth, ſuppoſing that Gain is Godlineſs*: Counting Godlineſs to be a Trade, Traffick, and Device for Gain. If Men do thus ſerve Deſigns by Truth, and practice upon it, and put it in the place of a *Mean*, not of an *End*; then, in this Caſe, 1*ſt* Men will be falſe to their own Profeſſion, to the Principles they hold forth, when worldly Intereſt calls them off. And this the Caſe of a *Hypocrite*, or the Caſe of Fear and Danger. 2*dly*, Hence it comes to paſs, that ſo much ridiculous and contemptible Stuff paſſeth abroad in the World for Religion. For I am fully perſwaded, if Truth were received for it ſelf, and out of the love of it, the World would eaſily be accorded and agreed in all the great Concernments of Religion.

gion. But becauſe Men ſerve Ends unduly, and and practice upon Truth; hence, I ſay, it comes to paſs, that a great deal of contemptible, and unreaſonable, and ridiculous Stuff paſſeth in ſo many parts of the World, for Religion. Men do not engage themſelves to look after *reaſonable Satisfaction*; and Truth is not the *End*, but the *Mean*. And to me it ſeems to be one of the greateſt Prodigies in the World, that Men that are Rational and Intelligent, ſhould admit that for Religion, which for its Shallowneſs, Emptineſs, and Inſignificancy, falls under the Juſt reproof and condemnation of Reaſon. Religion, which makes us leſs Men; Religion unintelligible, or not able to give Satisfaction to the noble Principles of God's Creation. But becauſe this is General, I will ſhew you what I mean in particular. I will inſtance in the Chriſtian Church and the Heathen World. In the *Heathen* World, the licentious and odious Feaſts of the drunken God *Bacchus*: The impure and filthy Solemnization of the Nativity of that common Whore *Flora*; which was ſo filthy, that it was by the *Roman* Senate at laſt prohibited. This hath been Religion in the Heathen World: Things altogether unſatisfactory to the Principles of Humane Nature. Then come to the *Chriſtian* World, and there the ſuperaddition of Articles of Faith that are ſuperadded in the *Romiſh* Church, founded neither in Nature nor Grace. I will mention but two. The *firſt* is, the ſuſpending the higheſt Effects of Divine Power, upon the ſlighteſt things imaginable; I mean, the pardon of Sin upon being ſhrived high Preſumption. The other is, the Prieſts Power to turn Attrition into Contrition, upon the Subjects Confeſſion: impoſſible in it ſelf: for the Alteration muſt be in the Subject. This, they ſay, they have Power to do and ſay. It was *Judas*'s Unhappineſs, that there was no Prieſt then: For, they

Diſ. XXIII.

ſay,

ſay, That if he had had a Prieſt to confeſs to, his Attrition had been as good as St. *Peter's* Mourning for his denying of his Maſter. Now can it be imagined, that any Man that is honeſt, and hath a mind to reconcile himſelf to God, ſhould believe ſuch ſorry things as theſe? That a Man may obtain the higheſt Indulgence from God by being ſhrived; or that any thing may be made Repentance, by confeſſing to a Prieſt? Now can any Man that uſeth Reaſon, depend upon ſuch Points as theſe are? Therefore, I ſay, this comes upon it, when Men do not with honeſt Hearts receive Truth, and deal ingenuouſly with it, they are in danger to become *vain in their Imagination*, &c.

Cum Chriſtiani comedunt quod colunt ſit Anima mea cum Philoſophis Averroes.

I proceed. How hath the World been ſcandalized by pretended Matters of Faith, which are in a downright contradiction to Reaſon; if Reaſon be able to tell us any thing that is true, what rational Man almoſt would not be tempted to ſay after *Averroes*, rather ſo to Sin againſt his Nature, as to admit a thing of ſuch diſproportion to all his Faculties? Can we think we ſhall prevail with Men, to put out their Eyes, and diſbelieve their ſenſes, that they may become good Chriſtians? The Turkiſh Hiſtory relates of a K. of *Perſia* inclined to Chriſtianity, diverted by ſuch like Reaſons.

And on the other ſide, how well ſatisfied is any Man of Reaſon and Underſtanding, in the great Materials of Religion; to wit, to live Godly, Righteouſly and Soberly? To live in high Regard of God, Reverence of Deity in a Man's Soul, a ſenſe of our own Inferiority and dependance; a feeling of Divine Communication, Motion of Gratitude and Thankfulneſs to God, the firſt cauſe and Original of Being, by whom we were called into Being, by whom we are maintained in Being, and from whom are all our hopes and expectations: To deal fairly with all Men, to be of Benign, and fair

fair carriage with all Perſons whatſoever, to deal with our fellow Creatures, as we would be dealt with. All the ways of God are ways of Righteouſneſs, Goodneſs, and Truth; and why ſhould not *ours* be ſo too? And then to govern our ſelves according to the Rules of Sobriety, Temperance, Chaſtity, and Moderation. *This* is ſolid, real, and ſubſtantial Religion; theſe are things of the greateſt certainty and Foundation in the World. Did we hold forth this to the World, we ſhould bring all Men in to give their Teſtiomony for Religion; ſave thoſe Men that have wrought themſelves into a Reprobate ſenſe: And then in the fourth place, in caſe of failure, to return by Repentance, do the contrary, be cautious and wary not to do the ſame again, and to aſk God forgiveneſs in the name of the Lord *Jeſus*, who is the only Advocate between God and Man. This is the Summary both of the *Religion of God's Creation*, and the *Religion of Chriſt's Reſtauration*: In thus doing we hold the Head, and build upon the Foundation of God's own laying. To live in regard of God, to deal fairly and equally, and righteouſly with our Neighbour; and Soberly and Temperately as to our ſelves: And whereſoever a Man fails, to return by Repentance, and to go to God for Pardon in the Name of the Lord *Jeſus*. I could wiſh that the World would but conſent that *theſe four* might be the Materials of Religion. But inſtead of Zeal for theſe, wherein hath Men's Zeal been exerciſed, but about certain Uſages, certain modes, and Making Parties? Here is the miſcarriage; this I account the greateſt folly and madneſs in the World; the ill lives of Chriſtians, and the beſtowing their Zeal upon matters wherein parties are conſtituted. Theſe things have been the ſcandal of Chriſtianity. But on the other ſide, in the true Chriſtian Religion, there is nothing but what is ſincere and ſolid, nothing of vain Suppoſitions

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nothing but what is conſonant and agreeable to the Principles of Reaſon, nothing but what may be repreſented lovely in the Eyes of all Perſons that have the Principle of Reaſon, for their Rule. The ſweet of Chriſtian Religion is this, that it careſſes and delights the Nature of Man. It is freedom from all impotent and unſatiable deſires which toſs a Man's Soul and make it reſtleſs; from all eager, violent and impetuous Luſts; and by theſe Men are torn in pieces; it is freedom from froathy, empty and ungrounded Joys, and theſe put Men into a Fools Paradice: It is freedom from vain, fooliſh and diſappointing Hopes, which ſink Men into Melancholy, when they find themſelves fruſtrated: It is freedom from all lawleſs, unruly and exorbitant Appetites; from preſaging Heart-miſgiving Fears; from anxious ſolicitous ſelf-devouring Cares, from inward Heart-burnings, from ſelf-eating Envy, from ſwelling Pride, Arrogancy and Ambition; from black ſelf-confounding Melancholy, from gnawing ſelf-tormenting Conſcience; from boiling anger, raging fury, inſolent ſelf-will and arbitrary preſumption; from all rigour, ſourneſs and ſeverity of Spirit; from all ungoverned Paſſions, which are like unruly Devils in the Soul of Man; and which make the Mind of Man *like the troubled Sea when it cannot reſt, whoſe Waters caſt forth Mire and Dirt.*

Iſ. 57. 20.

This is that which real Religion doth. For what is *Religion but Good Self-government?* What doth Religion ſignifie, but Application to God, and Imitation of him? For this is the Sum of all Religion, for us to affect to be in our Meaſure and Degree, like that Being whom we worſhip.

I would ſuperadd one thing more, that is the Harmony and Conſiſtency that is between true Reaſon, and Chriſtianity. There is the greateſt Correſpondence between the Principles of Reaſon, and Chriſtianity

Christianity that is between any things in the World: For the latter, Christianity, doth wholly acknowledge the former; and Christianity coming in upon the Apostacy from God's Creation, it restores, and calls Men back again: Christianity reinforceth recovery, establisheth, yea doth advance and highly improves every one of the Principles of God's Creation; which are the Principles of Reason: So far it is from being true, that Christianity doth discharge any of the Principles of the Creation of God, that it doth raise and improve them. As for instance; to do good for evil, to forbear all private revenge, to rejoyce in the good of the whole Creation, and to subordinate a Man's particular good to a more publick and universal good. Therefore Christianity doth not only recover Humane Nature, but carries it on to a higher Perfection. So that the Principles of Reason, the Principles of God's Creation, and *Christ*'s Restauration, do the self-same thing; and if they were well considered, nothing would give so great a satisfaction to the Mind of Man as they; nothing would better carry him on to that Perfection, of which he is capable. Of these Principles I affirm *three* things. *First.* They are satisfaction to the Reason of a Man's Mind. *Secondly.* Peace, Quiet, Ease, and Relief to his Conscience: And *Thirdly.* They keep Humane Nature in its Purity, and Integrity. Wherefore it is a great charge that lyes upon us, *to use Truth ingeniously.* Therefore if any one would be Restored, let him return again from whence he is departed, and Resettle in his Soul the Principles of God's Creation, and take care of the first Issue that immediately flow from them. I'll conclude with a saying of *Socrates*: Nature, the Workmanship of God, as coming out of God's Hands, is a preservative to all those that use it ingeniously and well. Dis. XXIII.

DISCOURSE XXIV.

The miſerable Degeneracy of Men through their Affectation of Atheiſm, and Practice of Wickedneſs.

ROM. 1. 21, 22.

——But became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh Heart was darkened.

Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became Fools.

Diſ. XXIV. YOU have had an account of God's Workmanſhip, the Foundation of God's laying; and what God might well expect, having done ſo much. But Men failing herein, I come now to ſhew you the fatal Iſſue and miſchievous Conſequences that follow upon ſo great a miſcarriage. Man able to ſee, know and underſtand that there is a God, and what he is; Man able to do him Honour, and to be thankful to him; failing in this, he runs out into vain Imaginations; and wherein he pretends to Wiſdom, therein he fools it more groſly. Whereupon my Obſervation is this: Where there is not a fair uſage of Divine Truth, (whether it be Truth Connatural or Revealed, where there is not Conſcience in Men in purſuance of their Knowledge) there nothing worthy of Religion is likely to follow. But the Conſequence is diſmal, the Miſcarriage ſhameful, vain Imagination, Darkneſs

neſs of Mind, Folly, and Superſtition. For thus Diſc. XXIV.
Judgment will not hold, where it is not ſettled and further purſued by ſuitable Diſpoſition and Practice. It is not ſo much the Diſability of Mens Natures, as the abuſe of themſelves: For Nature is Sovereign to them that uſe it well, in reſpect of its modeſty and averſeneſs to that that is Unhandſome, till Men pervert and abuſe Nature's Temper, by ill Uſe, Cuſtom, and Practice. No Man is born ſo as he makes himſelf by diſſolute living. The Sinner is modeſt and ſhamefaced at firſt: Evil begins at a little: For Goodneſs and Virtue are much more ſuitable to Nature's Senſe than Wickedneſs and Vice. Vice is contrary to Nature; if it were not ſo, it were not Vice. Vice is contrary to the Nature of Man, as a Man is a Man: For it is contrary to the order of Reaſon, which is Man's higheſt Principle. Now that Vice is grievous to the Nature of Man, I will inſtance but in three things: Irreverence toward God: Intemperance in reſpect of a Man's ſelf: Fury in reſpect of others. The Nature of Man ſtartles to hear a Man ſpeak of God prophanely; And to be ſottiſh, how loathſome is it to ſee! And for a Man to be Devilliſh, who is it that doth not run away from it? a Man forceth himſelf at firſt, before he can ſatisfie himſelf in any of theſe. In this Senſe I underſtand that of the Apoſtle, where God ſaith, *I will put my Laws into their Hearts, and in their Minds will I write them.* How doth God do this? In reſpect of his Divine and Spiritual Precepts, that God hath founded in Reaſon, and the Law of the Creation; concerning which, we need not that one ſhould ask another, as in the Carnal and *Moſaical* Inſtitution; which being Foreign to Nature, and containing ſo many Precepts, a Man had need to ask, *What am I to do next?* What in ſuch or ſuch a Caſe? But in reſpect to theſe Pre-

Vitium eſt contra naturam Hominis in quantum eſt homo, quia contra Ordinem Rationis.

Heb. 10. 16. Jer. 31. 33, 34.

cepts, theſe eternal Rights, theſe Principles of immutable and unchangeable Goodneſs and Truth: God hath written them in Mens Hearts, and hath put them into their Minds: And this is the meaning of thoſe Words, if you conſult the Context; for they are put into a contradiſtinction to theſe *Moſaical* Inſtitutions. But for theſe great Points, the Rectitude of a Man's Nature and Purity of his Mind, did continually lead him to them. The great Moraliſt tells us, That the Seeds of all Vertue are ſown into our own Nature; and if we did but ſuffer them to grow up, they would lead us into all happy Living. This is true in a Senſe incluſive of God's Grace and Aſſiſtance; as declaratory of the Iſſue of good endeavours, true uſe, improvement, and exerciſe of our Faculties: Or thus; this is to be underſtood, *cum bono Deo*, with Divine Protection, Grace and Aſſiſtance ſuppoſed, and upon good endeavours, true uſe, improvement, and Exerciſe of our Faculties. But on the other ſide, where Men ſink down into Senſuality and Brutiſhneſs, or become Light-headed, or intoxicated with vain Perſuaſions, or lay aſleep the noble Powers and Principles of Humane Nature, or contradict them by violent and unnatural practice, all things prove contrary to the intent of God's Creation: There is Darkneſs, Confuſion and inward Torture.

Semina Virtutum Ingeniis noſtris ſunt innata, quæ ſi adoleſcere per nos liceret, natura ad beatam vitam perduceret. Cicero.

Men may work themſelves out of Nature's Fence, out of Judgment of Truth, by ill uſe, cuſtom and practice. This you may take for granted, That *Men will not long continue to think well, after once they come to affect, or do otherwiſe than they ſhould*: For theſe two in conjunction, the Affection of the Mind, and Practice, will bear up with too great a force againſt Judgment alone. Therefore if Men ſpeak well, and they themſelves think and mean well; yet if they do not love Goodneſs and Righteouſneſs,

Frigida mens, tacita ſudant præcordia culpa.

teouſneſs, and do not live well, there is no hold of them. It is juſt the caſe of *Hazael*, 2 *Kings* 8. 13. The Prophet tells him what prodigious things he ſhould do; and he thinks it was not impoſſible for him to do ſuch things: But, What, *is thy Servant a Dog, that he ſhould do this great thing?* yet for all he was thus forewarned, had all poſſible advantage, yet he *did* theſe things. Therefore this is that I obſerve, if Men give themſelves up to looſe Practice, their Judgment will be counterbalanced by contrary Life and Practice. For the habituated Sinner (as every one doth become by Uſe, Cuſtom, and practice of Evil: The habituated Sinner) follows the Inclination of his Mind, againſt Reaſon and Judgment; he doth not conſult the Precepts of Righteouſneſs, but he doth what is next. When a Man is One, ſo in reſpect of his Reaſon and Underſtanding, that for his Inclination, he is not ſuch; it is eaſily gueſſed what ſuch a Man will come to. For ſingle Judgment will not long hold out againſt ſetled Diſpoſition and Habit. If Judgment be once corrupted, nothing is left to make any Reſiſtance, as the Apoſtle expreſſeth it, 1 *Tim.* 6. 5. *Men of corrupt Minds, and deſtitute of the Truth.* And 2 *Tim.* 3. 8. *Now as James and Jambres withſtood Moſes, ſo do theſe alſo reſiſt the Truth: Men of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the Faith,* Such Men down-right *reſiſt the Truth.* Hence it is that ſo many Men are ſo much Shipwrecked, ſo much broken, and come to nought. One would wonder how ſome are ſpoiled as they are: It is the Prodigy of the World: Nothing in the inferior World is equal to this Degeneracy of Rational Agents; who by violent practice have born down all before them, that they may quietly enjoy their Luſts. But here is the Caſe: Wickedneſs, and the Malignity of a Man's Heart, doth vitiate and ſpoil a Man's Temper: Wherefore let me adviſe you, let me propoſe

Diſc. XXIV.

Vol. III. pose upon account of Religion, two things; that every body, as he loves his Life, he would use care to establish in his own Soul a Throne of Judgment; and then take care that Heart and Life be reformed by it. And *this* I call Religion. It is an Inlet to a Flood of Evil; a little departure from Judgment. Two Evils follow upon it: *First*, It is far harder to return to a Man's Judgment than to have stood to it. *Secondly*, One false Act it doth betray a Man; it is to the weakening of his Judgment; and Judgment of Right is the first and leading Principle of Religion.

Now I have done with this Observation: Upon the whole, I will make one other Observation; and that is this, to prevent a Mistake: Our Apostle here in this Chapter, goes on declaring the way of Sinners being received by God, and I have followed the Apostle: But where is he now? He is now come to treat of the natural Knowledge of God, and the fatal issue of an ineffectual entertainment of it.

I will make this Advantage of it, to prevent all Mistakes, That Men are not wanting to preach the Doctrine of the Gospel, or to *preach Christ*, tho' they do not name Christ in every Period of Words; who contend for all Effects of real Goodness, and decry every Wickedness. If this be not so, our Apostle hath greatly forgot himself. If Men contend for the effects of real Goodness, and decry Wickedness, they do truly and properly preach *Christ*. And this is the Reason; for this is the effect of *Christ*, and this is *Christ*'s business. *God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless us.* Act. 3. 26. How? *by turning away every one of us from his Sins.* Wherefore whosoever doth deal with Men to leave off Sin, preaches *Christ*, and carries on *Christ*'s Work. *That Repentance and Remission of Sins should be preached in his Name.* Luk. 24. 47. They preached *Christ* who

who preached Repentance. And again: *The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation.* What doth that teach? *To deny Ungodlineſs and worldly Luſts; and to live Soberly, Righteouſly, and Godly.* Here are the Effects of Morality. Therefore talk no more against Moral Preachers: For they who call upon Men to live Godly, Righteouſly, and Soberly, they carry on the Work of *Chriſt*, and theſe Men preach *Chriſt*. And (to add no more) by the Promiſes *we are made partakers of the Divine Nature, having eſcaped the Corruption that is in the World through Luſt.* Therefore it is not Chriſtianity to uſe the Name of Chriſt, as we do uſe a Charm; or only as a Badge of a Profeſſion; as all they do who affect to uſe the Name of *Chriſt* unintelligibly, inſignificantly, unaccountably. For to ſpeak of Chriſt really, and to ſpeak Sence when I name him, two things are to be underſtood: For *Chriſt* doth denote two things. *Firſt*, A *Perſon* engaged for us, in a way well underſtood; for we are told it, and have learned it, and can give an account of it. And, *Secondly*, he doth denote a Nature in us, which we very well feel in us. and can expreſs. He therefore holds forth *Chriſt*, that ſpeaks to either of theſe Purpoſes: Sometimes to one, and ſometimes to the other, as the Argument leads him. And by the way, let Men underſtand what it is to *preach Chriſt*: See how the Apoſtle begins in the 16th Verſe, and goes on in the 19th Verſe. So that Chriſt is preached, tho' in every Sentence he be not named, if the Buſineſs of *Chriſt* be done, and the Work of Chriſt carried on.

Dif. XXIV. 2 Tit. 11. 12. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

Now I am to give you an account of theſe Words; *Profeſſing themſelves to be wiſe, they became Fools.*

You

You are to underſtand theſe Words ſpoken of Perſons that are quite out of the way of true Reaſon, and ſober Religion. I would conſider theſe Words two ways: *Firſt*, *Abſolutely*, as in themſelves: And *ſecondly*, In relation to the words that go and follow after. In the former way, they afford us this Obſervation, *they who think themſelves to be wiſe, are leaſt of all ſo*: They who conceit themſelves to be Wiſe are the verieſt Fools: None more really mad than thoſe that flatter themſelves, and conceit themſelves to be ſome Body. For theſe Men fail in that that is the very firſt Principle of Reaſon with all wiſe Men, *viz. know thy ſelf*: And they fail againſt the great direction of Divine Wiſdom, *In all thy ways acknowledge God, and he ſhall directs thy paths*; and the direction of the Prophet: *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the Wiſe-man glory in his Wiſdom*, &c. For *whoſoever truſteth in his own Heart is a Fool.* They are a great deal worſe for their ſelf-conceit: For conceit doth intoxicate, and make Men neglective of the means of Knowledge. Whoſoever are conceited, are ſelf-flatterers: And toward others, they are very Importune, Grievous, and Troubleſome whoſoever happens to fall into the Hands of a ſelf-conceited Perſon, who always is a ſelf-flatterer, and in reſpect of others an Impoſer; I appeal to this Man to eſtimate and to judge the Beauty and Excellency of thoſe Divine Vertues, Modeſty, and Humility; to him theſe are ſufficiently recommended. Theſe kind of Perſons they do little conſider thoſe things that rule in the Life of Man, neither the uncertainty of things; otherwiſe they would talk leſs peremptorily: They have little weighed the many Temptations, and various Repreſentations that are made to Man; nor our inſufficiency, either to act or determine wiſely, in the ſeveral occaſions of Life; which whoſoever hath taken into conſideration, he is Moderate and Wary. But theſe Men have over-looked all

Prov. 3. 6.

Jer. 9. 23.
Prov. 28. 6.

all theſe, and take upon them to dictate and declare, and controul all Mens ſenſe: Theſe Men are full of themſelves indeed, but really empty and ſhallow. I dare, without violation of Charity, determine thus far; he is not for certain a Wiſe-man, who either thinks himſelf *Able* enough for his own defence againſt all things that may befal him; or *Wiſe* enough for his own direction; or *Good* enough for his own ſatisfaction. This I offer upon a general conſideration, taking theſe Words out of the Context, *Profeſſing themſelves to be Wiſe, they became Fools.* Dif. XXIV.

Secondly. I conſider theſe words as they ſtand in the Context, and as in conjunction with what comes after: *They changed the Glory of the uncorruptible God into an Image made like to corruptible Man, and changed the Truth of God into a Lie.* in conjunction with theſe other Words, I obſerve, that it is not at all the wiſdom, knowledge, or largeneſs of Mens Underſtandings; but their Headineſs, Fondneſs Preſumption and Folly to do any thing in Religion, without true Reaſon or Divine Direction: It is the folly and madneſs of Men, to be found out of the way of Reaſon, or Divine Direction; for where God doth not reſolve in particular, by ſome piece of Revealed Truth; there God refers Men to the Principles of his Creation, Reaſon. Wherefore if you have not a Text of Scripture, be rational in what you do: For what is rationally done, will juſtifie it ſelf; for what is without Reaſon, is without Efficacy; and *what is not from God we cannot think will recommend us to God*: As in particular, the forming of an Image of God; the ſecond Commandment againſt it; no Reaſon at all for the uſe of Images in Divine Worſhip, and I am ſure no Inſtitution of God in the caſe. For ſince the date of the Inſtitutions of Chriſt; the true Chriſtian Worſhip is to *Worſhip God in Spirit, and to Rejoyce in the Lord Jeſus*: Phil. 3. 3.

Jeſus: The former becauſe God is a Spirit, the latter becauſe Chriſt is the way to God. One God and one Mediator: and *Heb.* 13. 15. *By him therefore let us offer the Sacrifice of Praiſe to God continually*; Which imports owning and acknowledging the Head. Wherefore, as no other *Object of Worſhip*, than the God that made Heaven and Earth, ſo no other *means of Worſhip*, but the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, by whom whoſoever comes to God certainly finds acceſs, *Acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt.* And to me it is very remarkable, what St. *John* the beloved Diſciple cloſeth his Epiſtle with, *Little Children keep your ſelves from Idols.* Which gives us ſtrong Intimation, that in the Chriſtian State, there may be Danger of Idols. And then *Worſhipping the Creature more than*, or above *the Creator.* I a little vary that, for I think that Condemnation reacheth no Body: I read it therefore in conjunction with the Creator; Not that they did *Prefer* them, but *conjoyn* them. Now the Text ſaith, theſe kind of Perſons *became Fools* in ſo doing. And it is ſtrange that any that pretend to adore God ſhould do it ſo poorly; that inſtead of Religion, they ſhould be accounted mad and fooliſh: For this there are theſe two accounts wherein the Madneſs and Folly doth conſiſt.

1 Pet. 2. 5.

1 Joh. 5. 21.

Iſa. 44. 19. *Firſt.* Scripture *calls it ſo. They cut down a Tree, with Part thereof they build a Houſe, with Part thereof they make a Fire, and with the reſidue thereof they make a God.* Now, ſaith the Prophet, *they conſider not in their Hearts* how dull and ſottiſh they are in thus doing: *None conſidereth in his Heart, neither is there Knowledge, nor Underſtanding, to ſay, I have burnt part of it in the Fire, yea alſo I have baked Bread upon the Coals thereof, I have roaſted Fleſh and eaten it, and ſhall I make the reſidue thereof an Abomination? ſhall I fall down to the ſtock of a Tree?* Thus it is judged therefore, if the Scripture be called to give Judgment

in

in the case. The like you have in *Jer* 10th. 11th. A remarkable place both for the Argument, and the Language of the place. *The Gods that have not made the Heavens and the Earth, even they shall perish, from the Earth, and from under these Heavens.* In these Words there is Argument enough. The God's that did not make these Heavens and this Earth, they are not Supream: but the God that made the Heavens and the Earth, he, and he alone, is Supream and Sovereign. Then for their *Language*: Whereas all before is *Hebrew*, this is put into the *Chaldean* Language, as words that they might then understand, when they should be in Captivity. And *Psal.* 97. 7. *Confounded be all they that serve graven Images, that boast themselves of Idols*; and *Deut.* 4. 12. And *the Lord spake unto you out of the midst of the Fire, ye heard the voice of the Words, but saw no similitude, only ye heard a Voice.* It is too much for any Creature to take upon him to make a *Shechina*, a place of Divine Inhabitation, a thing God seems jealous off, 2 *Sam.* 7. 5. *Shalt thou build a House for me to dwell in?* Spake I a word about it? Even where he accepted *Davids* good meaning. That is the first, the sense of Scripture. Dif. XXIV.

Secondly. In the Nature of the thing: No grosser Folly in the World, nor greater wrong to our selves, than upon account of Conscience, or in point of Religion, to come under Obligation to any thing that is not *materially* true, as verified either in Reason or Scripture; and that for these Reasons, (1*st.*) All such is the Person's Superstition; and is not a Foundation of Reward: For I take it thus, that if any make themselves to be bound in Conscience, where they are not, they are superstitious; and though they may by God be Pardoned, yet this is no Foundation of a Reward; but so far forth they are loosers, Builders *with Hay and Stubble*, 1 *Cor.* 3. 15. (2*dly.*) A Man parts with his Liberty, (which is a dear

dear and choice thing,) where he ſhould not; and this is clean contrary to 1 *Cor.* 6. 12. *All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the Power of any.* I ſpeak now of things admitted as matters of Religion, or as parts of it; for there is great difference between *Parts* of Worſhip, and *Circumſtances* of Worſhip. I meddle not with things wherein Men may ſubmit to their Superiour, or comply with their Brother. In things of an indifferent Nature, we may without offence to our Judgment and Conſcience, obſerve Superiours, or comply with our Brethren, to encreaſe Love and Good-will; and uſe our own Chriſtian Prudence and Liberty: For the thing in its own Nature doth not determine us: But we enſlave, and bring our ſelves into Bondage, when we are bound in reſpect of internal ſenſe and judgment; where things are not neceſſarily due or made due by ſome appointment of God, I take it for granted where Scripture doth not limit or direct us, there God doth refer us to the former Communications of himſelf, in the Light of his Creation. Now if that a Man receives be not *materially* true, he doth receive that as from God, that is not from him. And (2*dly.*) he gives that to it, that he ſhould give to God, (3*dly.*) he doth ſubject himſelf to that that is not Sovereign to him, as Reaſon, which is his Home Informer and Monitor within his own Breaſt. It is Mans Natural Perfection and therefore there is more due to Reaſon than to thoſe things that are but his Imagination, (4*thly.*) it is not Reſtaurative to him in his lapſed State, as all things in Religion are, if it be not materially true, ſolid in it ſelf, real and ſubſtantial; or hath not warrant from God, it hath no Reſtaurative Vertue to Man, in his ruined and lapſed Condition; and therefore doth not deſerve that Man ſhould pay that to it, that is due to Reaſon, or Religion. My 5th. Reaſon is this, That if Men admit any thing

thing into the repute of their Religion that is not intrinsically Rational, or truly warrantable; they lay stress upon that that will not bear weight, and therefore will deceive them: For it *is not as the Fool thinks, but as things really are.* Now this otherwhere is accounted Weakness and Shallowness, which Men that would be thought wise, are most unwilling to be accounted guilty of. Nothing betrays any Man more for Folly than false Confidences, and lying Refuges, *Prov.* 14. 15. A Man doth himself a much greater wrong, by doing a ridiculous Act, than if a thousand Men should bestow the Name of Fool upon him. In this Case of laying weight upon things above what they can bear; expecting from them that that is not in them, Men put the Fool upon themselves; which is worse: For if others do it, we easily suffer the wrong; but if we do it our selves, of whom shall we demand satisfaction? Thus have I done with the second Consideration: That it is Madness and Folly in Men, to charge upon themselves that that hath no Foundation in Reason or Divine Authority. Therefore give me Religion that is grounded in Reason, and by Divine Authority; and that doth attain real Effects, such as are worthy. In short, to instance in Particulars: The Religion that makes Men humble and modest; not proud and conceited; That makes Men poor in Spirit; not full of their own Mind; not given up to their own Sense, and thereupon to Selfwill: The Religion that makes Men good-natur'd; not all for themselves: That makes Men loving, and not hard-hearted: That makes Men kind, not harsh and cruel: The Religion that makes Men patient, not furious and outragious: That makes Men mild and gentle, not revengeful: The Religion that makes Men subject and obedient to Government and Authority; not that that is turbulent and troublesome: The Religion

Dis. XXIV.

gion that makes Men courteous, affable, and ſociable, not ſour, moroſe, and dogged: That makes Men ready to forgive, not implacable: The Religion that makes Men favourable in making beſt Conſtructions of Word, Carriages, and Behaviour, and not that that makes *Men Offenders for a Word*, as the Prophet ſpeaks, *Eſai* 29. 21. Such ſevere captious Perſons there are, that *make a Man an Offender for every Word* that cometh out of his Mouth: The Religion that makes Men ready to commiſerate in every compaſſionable Caſe, as we hope God does, *Samaritan* like, tender-hearted; not as the *Jews*, that would have no Dealings or Converſe but with thoſe of their own Nation, unleſs they agreed with them in all their Modes. This is what Religion is in its proper Effects; and if this Religion took but place in the World, we ſhould All find our ſelves the better for it.

DIS

DISCOURSE XXV.

The miſerable Degeneracy of Men through their Affectation of Atheiſm and Practice of Wickedneſs.

ROM. 1. 28, 32.

And even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind, &c.

Who knowing the Judgment of God, (that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of Death,) not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.

YOU may remember, that for the remaining part of this Chapter, I only propoſed to ſpeak two things. The *Miſcarriages* of Sinners: And the *Judgment* of God upon theſe Miſcarriages. Concerning Mens *Miſcarriages* I have ſpoken already; that is, Mens knowing that there is a God, and *not glorifieing him as God*: That Men being beholden to God, are not *Thankful*: That Men run out into vain *Imagination*, grow conceited and fooliſh; concerning Mens Vanity in modelling Worſhip to their own Fancies, making an *Image of the uncorruptible God like to corruptible Man.* There remains two more, of which I will ſpeak, and then proceed to thoſe forms of Words which repreſent God's diſpleaſure; as *giving Men up to their own Hearts Luſts,*

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to vile affections, and to reprobacy of Mind. Only two *Miſcarriages* remain now to be ſpoken to, verſe the 28*th.* and verſe the 32*d.* If the time will permit I will give you an account of theſe two at this time; and afterwards give you an account of God's Indignation, and Diſpleaſure upon this high provocation. And truly this form of Words, verſe *the* 28*th. Not like to retain God in their Knowledge:* They do not only challenge Sinners but alſo give us a fair account: And it is admirable and ſatisfactory to underſtand things aright; and things are never known but when we ſee them in their *Cauſes* and Principles. He is a Wiſe-man that underſtands things from the Causes and Principles of them: *Not liking to retain God in their Knowledge.* Whence I obſerve, that it is not ſo much that there is difficulty in the Knowledge of God; it is not a real difficulty or uncertainty concerning the Being of God, that God is ſo little known, or regarded in the World; neither is it ſo much Man's Impotency and Incapacity, that he lives without God in the World; as it is his Unwillingneſs Averſeneſs, and Diſaffection. It is that that is his Affectation, either that God is not, or that he is unconcerned. And this is a great Truth: For we muſt know that it is very monſtrous, and horridly degenerate, to be off from the Original of Being: This Being Univerſal in Nature, whence we are, by the ſame are we maintained. And ſo the Prophet repreſents it. *Hear, O Heavens, and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken:* Which is a reproach to Man, intimating that it is better ſpeaking to *the* Brutes, than to Men that are become brutiſh. What? *I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me.* And verſe the 3d. *The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Cribb; but Iſrael doth not know, my People doth not conſider.* And ſo the Prophet *Malachi*; *A Son Honoureth his Father, and a Servant his Maſter:* If

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere Cauſas.

Ex iiſdem nutrimur, ex quibus conſtamus.

Iſ. 1. 2.

Mal. 1. 6.

If then I be a Father, where is mine Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear? But this is the baseness, that doth accompany Unrighteous dealing, that where we have begun to wrong God, there we proceed to hate him, or at least to wish he were not. And this you may observe in all bad Natures; he is made an Enemy, not only who hath done an ill Office, but he whom he hath wronged: Not only he is an Enemy that hath done an ill Office, but he is an Enemy also, whom this bad Natured Man hath wronged. For where we have once done an injury, we take it for granted, the injured Person is our Enemy, and then go about to disable him, for our own security. Bad Natures that are full of Naughtiness, are unacquainted with that noble disposition that enclines Men to Pardon: And therefore whersoever they have injured, they hate. Thus it is between Man and Man, and so it is between God and Man. *For Men think of God as they are themselves: Thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thy self.* But on the contrary, see what the Grace of the Gospel leads Men to in case of failure or miscarriage: The Grace of the Gospel bids Deprecate, Repent, Acknowledge, leave off to Sin, do so no more, ask God forgiveness: So vast a difference there is between the Strain of the World, and the Spirit of Religion; the tempers of the subjects differ as much as the State of Heaven and Hell. *One* of these, he in whom the Spirit of Religion dwells, thus he thinks and saith to God, *whom have I in Heaven but thee? Who in Earth that I desire in comparison with the? It is good for me to draw near to God.* Attract and draw me to thee, and stay me with thee. But the *Other*, *God is not in all his thoughts: God far from his Reins*: And the sense of his Soul is, *Depart from us, we will not the Knowledge of thy ways.* This then is my Observation, future subjective misery is not any forreign imposition by Power, but it

Dis. XXV.

Pf. 50. 21.

Pf. 73, 25, 28.

Pf. 10. 4. Jer. 12. 2. Job 21. 24. & 22. 17.

it is an acquired Conſtitution of Man's Mind and Spirit: It is guilt upon Mens Conſciences, and a Malignity of Spirit. For me thinks, the Phraſe in the Text is very Characteriſtical, *Not liking to retain God in their Knowledge*: Which is a note of remarkable Diſtinction.

Now, leaſt I may diſcourage any Body, either by declaring that which he finds not practicable, or in that he is ſenſible of his own ſhortneſs, I here declare, two things do not amount to the caſe in the Text; *of not likeirg to retain God in their Knowledge.*

Firſt. An unavoidable Interruption, or a Ceſſation from actual Thoughts of God, at times. For this cannot be remedied, becauſe of the neceſſity of our weak Natures. There muſt be Eating, Drinking, and Sleeping. Alſo theſe Minds of ours will not bear Divine Cogitation; and we cannot, in this State, bear too intenſe Thoughts of God; though truly there is no great Danger in it neither; for the worſt of it would be to die by Philoſophy: We may be ſwallowed up by mental Contemplation of the Deity it ſelf.

Secondly. There are Avocations of buſineſs in a way of ordinary Employment; and this not only lawful for us, but it is neceſſary for us to regard them. And to theſe two I *add*, that there are Indiſpoſitions occaſionally, when Men are out of temper. The beſt of us all doth not find himſelf always alike, and how it comes to paſs he cannot tell.

It is not a *negative Ceſſation* from actual Thoughts of God for a time, that doth interrupt our Communion with him; but a *private Defection*, and taking up of our Hearts in receiving full ſatisfaction in the things of this Life: A ſtaying too long abroad from God, or committing Spiritual Fornication with the Creature. When we over-look overtures from God, are wanting to ſeaſon and opportunity

opportunity: When we do not cloſe with remark- Diſ XXV.
able, advantages to retire a while, and think of God: This is a private Defection, and that that is culpable. In ſhort, *Three* things are prejudicial to our Duty toward God, and our Happineſs in enjoyment of him. *Firſt.* If there be an inward *Diſplacency*, an habitual Indiſpoſition, and Averſation. *Secondly.* If there be a long and a tedious *Vacancy* from acts of acknowledgment of God, and a ſence of our dependence upon him. For Men may grow ſtrangers, by never meeting. *Thirdly.* When there is not due *Subordination* of Temporals to Spirituals. But otherwiſe here is my rule, he cannot be thought to neglect his Journey, who intends it in the Morning when he ſets out, and reſerves to himſelf day-room enough, and keeps on in his way, till he comes to his Journeys end. So whoſoever doth acknowledge God at his firſt ſetting out, when I *awake I am ſtill with thee*, either from my natural Reſt, or to every new undertaking: Now he that begins with God, that is, he takes care that he engages himſelf in that that is warranted by God, and goes by rules of Action, and is ſenſible of his own inſufficiency (who is but a ſecond Cauſe) without the aſſiſtance of God, who is the firſt Cauſe, and uſeth proper means; he doth not lie under the charge of the Text. Two cautions here I will give: *Firſt*, That all obſerve things in order to the end. *Secondly*, Nothing deſtructive, nothing inconſiſtent: That is for the Second. Though employed in our worldly buſineſs, and without actual thoughts of God for a while, we are not to charge our ſelves, with *not liking to retain God in our Minds.* Then the third, that we are not always our ſelves. This will be wholly unavoidable, during this State. For while theſe *three* things are, the beſt of Men cannot promiſe himſelf to be in that temper, in which he allows himſelf to be.

Firſt. While encumbred with *Bodies*, which are very apt to be weather-wiſe; and it is only a Man that is tranſcendently wiſe, that can overcome bodily Temper: But ſuch a Man is a Rarity in the World. Very good Men find themſelves ill diſpoſed, from theſe dull and groſs Bodies: Our Bodies are affected by change of time. Theſe Gallant Men, the *Platoniſts*, did mightily complain of dulneſs and ſtupidity of Body, here there muſt be allowance: For no Man's Body hears the Reaſon of his Mind. The Body is not capable of Inſtruction, but muſt be governed by other arts; by abſtinence and Temperance, and Compliance with Seaſons.

Secondly. While we are liable to be at times *Surpriſed* with ſudden Emergencies, which buſy our Heads, and take up our thoughts, and employ them: If that fall out, that we look not for. We have inſtances of ſome, that have dyed either with ſudden joy, or grief. Sudden Emergences take up our thoughts how to behave our ſelves in ſuch a caſe.

Thirdly. While we fall into variety of *Converſe*. In different Companies, things paſs under different and various Repreſentations. So that a Man ſometimes finds other Mens Opinions better than his own; which gives us occaſion to vary our Opinion of things, and preſently to be of another Opinion. And this is for the better; for we that are Finite and Fallible ought not to think our ſelves wiſe enough for our own direction, nor able enough for our own preſervation, nor good enough to our own ſatisfaction. In this caſe, a Man is all of a ſudden diſpoſſeſſed of himſelf, and carried out to new Apprehenſions. This will employ a Man, as if he had the Government of the World in his Hands: Theſe things make a Man to be leſs himſelf, and not to purſue his former intention.

This

This is all the abatement that I can give you, for aſſurance that you are not in this condemnation, *Of not liking to retain God in your Minds*, becauſe you are in a diſpoſition from one, or more of theſe three things. But for a *Caution* on the other ſide, great care muſt be taken: If this indiſpoſition be contracted by Guilt, by an undue act, or any culpable Neglect; then take care of two things. *Firſt*. That aſſoon as may be, Conſcience be relieved and eaſed, and the Guilt taken off in the way the Goſpel doth direct. *Secondly*. That the Integrity of your diſpoſition Godward be recovered, by the Motions of ſerious Repentance; which is always attended with great Humility, and ſenſe of our own Weakneſs, Apprehenſion of our neceſſary dependance upon God, and double care for the time to come, and after-diligence. For though it is poſſible for a regenerate Man to fall, and to Sin; yet it is true that St. *John* ſaith, *whoſoever is born of God doth not commit Sin*: If he do Sin, he paſſes into another Nature: 'Tis unnatural to the regenerate ſtate to commit Sin. Then he doth not like himſelf; if he do not recover himſelf by Repentance, if he doth not renew his Repentance, and his Faith. And no Man can aſſure himſelf, that his Repentance is ſincere, unleſs conjoyn'd with deep Humility, and a ſenſe of our own Weakneſs, and an Apprehenſion of our neceſſary dependance upon God, and unleſs he doth really intend to be more watchful over himſelf, and diligent for the time to come. It is not Religion for a Man to confeſs Sin, and to commit it: And commit Sin, and confeſs it. But whoſoever doth confeſs Sin, and pray to God for pardon, he ought certainly to uſe all means to preſerve himſelf for time to come, that he ſin not in the ſame kind. And he is not only diſtempered, but is plainly dead in Sin, who is never awakened, to look out after means of recovery.

Dif. XXV.

1 John. 3. 9.

And this is the Caution I ſuperadd, that the Point I am upon may not be a Doctrine of Careleſneſs. I reſerve the caſe of unavoidable Interruption, or ceſſation from actual Thoughts of God at times. But if an Averſation towards God, contracted by Guilt of Sin, or any undue Act, or culpable Neglect, then care to be taken, that as ſoon as may be, Conſcience may be relieved and eaſed, and the Guilt taken off in the way the Goſpel doth direct. Any body that hath received a Wound, the firſt thing he doth he goeth to a Surgeon. If any one have taken Poyſon (though by Accident) he preſently goes to an Antidote. So if any Man have wrought himſelf into an Averſation Godward, by conſenting to known Evil, he muſt look upon himſelf as having admitted Poyſon; he hath ſinned againſt his own Life: Therefore his firſt care muſt be, to make his Peace with God, and relieve his Conſcience from Guilt by Repentance: And that it appear to be real, let it be accompanied with deep Humility, and a Senſe of his own Weakneſs, and an Apprehenſion of his neceſſary Dependance upon God; and let him be more watchful over himſelf, and diligent for the time to come, that he do not wrong his Soul, or give his God an Offence a ſecond time.

I now paſs on to diſcourſe of the 32d *Verſe*.

Who knowing the Judgment of God, that they which commit ſuch things are worthy of Death, not only do the ſame, but have pleaſure in them that do them.

This is the laſt Character that repreſents the degenerate State of miſerable Mortals. I have ſpoken to all the former heretofore: Now in ſhort to this.

And

And I will only gloss in four or five Particulars upon these Words.

First, Who knowing.] This is highly observable, and of great advantage to us; whereupon our Apostle lays the stress of Mens Sin, the aggravation of Mens Sin; and whereupon he grounds Mens being liable and obnoxious to Condemnation within themselves, and Condemnation from God. *Knowing.*] *viz.* Upon their natural Capacity of knowing there is a God, and knowing there is a vast difference of things. This is the Foundation we stand upon, against the Atheism and Profaneness of a dissolute World. And I dare assure any affected Atheist in the World, that if he can implead God at the Day of Judgment, that God did not make him to know God, and to know that there is a great difference between Good and Evil; he shall stand in his Cause. And pray observe how often this is repeated by the Apostle; and he lays it down for his Foundation every where, where he doth reprove and challenge, *verse* the 19*th. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them*, Verse the 20*th. For the invisible things from the Creation of the World are clearly seen*, Verse the 21*st. Because that when they knew God*, Verse the 28th. *And even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge.* He makes this the Condemnation of Men; intimating that Man hath the Knowledge of God and Sense of Deity; but takes no pleasure in any thoughts of God. And then in this place, *Who knowing the Judgment of God*, &c. And pray of whom doth the Apostle speak all this? Not of Men that were disciplined in any way of Worship; but he speaks this of Men we call Heathens; and he chargeth all this upon them in respect of the natural Principle. This we are to understand, that God did more than a little, when he made Man Intelligent and Volun-

Voluntary: And in this reſpect he doth repreſent God more than all the Creation below him; and herein Men are made in the Image of God upon a Natural Account. And whereſoever there is in the Make, a Principle of Reaſon and Underſtanding, there is a Foundation of Religion and Conſcience. Now let this be our Juſtification, if any one calls us Moraliſts only, and not Divines; That we write after the Apoſtles Example, and imitate the Apoſtles, when we do build upon the Foundation God hath laid, when we build upon Natural Principles, the Principles of God's Creation: And, which is further obſervable, the Apoſtle ſpeaks all this of the degenerate State of Mankind. They therefore miſerably repreſent God in the World, that think he will Judge his Creatures by his Power: He will examine them by the Principles he gave them in the moment of his Creation, and we need not fear being condemned of God, if we are not ſelf-condemned. That is the firſt.

Secondly. The Judgment of God. That is a remarkable Word in the *Greek*, τὸ δικαίωμα. Whence I do obſerve, That all God's Impoſitions upon Men, all his Injunctions, all his Inſtitutions, whether they are in a way of Command or Prohibition, they are all the Fruits of *Wiſdom* and Underſtanding, in conjunction with *Righteouſneſs*. They are either juſt in themſelves, or elſe the Uſe of his Rightful Power. For Power, Dominion, and Property he hath over his Creatures. In the State of Creation we read not of any thing *Poſitive*, but one ſingle Prohibition. And without doubt it was the Right of him that raiſed a Creature out of nothing, to have limited him more if he had pleaſed. In the Goſpel-State nothing at all is *Poſitive*, but what is uſeful, expedient, and convenient. There is nothing but what the neceſſity of Man's Apoſtacy did call in and require.

require. As for inſtance; here you have a Summary of the Goſpel, as it is a Superaddition to the Law of the Creation; *To go to God in the Name of Chriſt*: And then the *Two Sacraments*. Theſe three make up the Superaddition of the Goſpel to the Religion of the Creation. Then for the Religion of the Creation; thoſe famous, glorious, eminent, univerſal Rights, theſe are of univerſal acknowledgment; to wit, to live in all Reverence of God; to be ſober and temperate in the Government of our ſelves; Juſt and Righteous in our Dealings one with another; or, as the Prophet ſaith, *To do juſtly, and love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.* But that all the Diſpenſations of God to Man are all Sentences of Juſtice and Righteouſneſs; beſides that in Reaſon, we cannot otherwiſe think, Scripture abundantly declares. *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true in all thy Judgments. Is there Unrighteouſneſs in God? God forbid. Can God by Power do any thing that is contrary to right?* And the Apoſtle, *He ſhall judge the World in Righteouſneſs.* And this makes me ſuperadd a little more: For this Word in the Text, as it may import the *Righteouſneſs of God* in his Sentences, ſo it may alſo the Righteouſneſs of God in juſtifying Creatures; and when he comes to controul and puniſh the Exorbitancy of a Creature, he doth not at all exceed. I will make two *Inferences* and paſs on. Then there is no Wrong from God to any Creature, nor any hard meaſure. Nothing is more certain, than that God hateth nothing that he hath made; *His tender Mercies are over all his Works. Secondly*, If this be a Law of Heaven, where there is a Power that cannot be reſiſted, where there is fulneſs of Liberty: If this be a Law with Heaven, That all the Proceedings from God to his Creatures be Righteous and Juſt; why ſhould not finite and fallible Creatures think it worthy of themſelves, to be limited

Dif. XXV.

Mic. 6. 8.

Pſal. 119. 137. Rom. 9. 14. Job 8. 3. Act. 17. 31.

Δικαίωμα Θεῦ.

Omnes viæ Domini in æquitate, rectitudine, juſtitia.

limited to ways of Reaſon? Why ſhould not we think it becomes us to juſtifie what we do or require by the Reaſon of things? Let a Man but think thus, he that will do becauſe he will; let him but ask himſelf, Suppoſe his Superior ſhould govern by that meaſure, what a caſe or condition ſhould he be in? Since therefore God, who hath a Power; ſince all his ways are regulated and confined by Laws of Reaſon and Juſtice; he is a moſt degenerate Creature, that will do becauſe he will; and cares not to be ruled by any Reaſon.

Thirdly. Who knowing the Judgment of God.] Wherein Men are concerned, they may know, and may have an account of the dealings of God with them, that they are Juſt and Righteous. And is there better Quarter in all the World? Doth any one deſire more, either of Parent or Brother, than that he ſhould have no other Uſage but what is juſtifiable by Reaſon? Upon this account only we are ſelf-condemned, if we do not obſerve God's Injunctions: For Negative Infidelity will never deſtroy any: But that Men do not receive when they are offered, or do when they may. God is not an *Egyptian* Task-maſter. I dare ſay, to the Honour of God, that if he lay no Foundation, he doth not look for any Superſtructure. If he doth not give a Capacity, no more accountable than the Irrationals are. But if they know; according to their Knowledge they are under Obligation to Obedience. There is nothing, wherein the World hath more agreed, than in theſe two: *A Univerſal general Cauſe*, and that there is in themſelves a vaſt *difference between Good and Evil* upon a Moral conſideration. A general conſent of Nations in this matter.

Fourthly. That they who commit ſuch things are worthy of Death. There is a Worthineſs of Death in the things they do, whom God condemns. We

are

are apt to fly in the Face of God, and think if God would, we may do what we will; and if God would pardon, we may live as we list, and no harm done. It is not the Inflictor, but the Demeritorious Cause that is worthy of blame: For the very things that they do are deadly things: Yea, they are materially Death it self. For what is Sin but the Death of the Soul? and we say the Person guilty is *dead in Law*, there needs nothing but the Declaration of it, and making it out. Now Sin is the Death of the Soul; for Sin divides from God, the Fountain of Life; and none can have Life, but by communication and participation; wherefore it as necessarily follows, that there should be Death, if Sin interposeth, as there is a necessity there should be Darkness, if any thick Body interpose, and cut off the Beams of the Sun from us. Dis. XXV.

Two *Inferences.* 1*st.* We are then quite out of danger of God's Power, Prerogative or Dominion over us, if we do not betray our selves; if there be no Guilt, we need not fear God slavishly at all. For if you be not guilty, you are not obnoxious; his great Power is your Preservation.

2*dly.* Wilful Sinners are Self-murtherers, ruine their own Souls. They are as truly Self-murtherers, as he that shall know a thing is Poyson, and yet takes it.

Fifthly. Not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them. I observe from these Words, Men make themselve obnoxious, otherwise than by their own personal Acts. A Man is not only guilty for what he doth, but for what he takes pleasure in. A Man may make himself guilty, by applauding, or approving an evil Act after it is done, by shewing complacency or assent to what is evilly done. Wherefore all Abettors,

all

all Counsellors, all Consentors, all that after take pleasure in the thing done, all that justifie the Person that do it, they are all guilty.

I will close this with two *Inferences*.

First. Let me charge you highly to take care of your *Company*. For though you are well resolved, that for your own selves you will do nothing but what is Just; yet if you be in Company, and take pleasure; yea, I dare say, by being silent, you will become obnoxious.

Secondly. Let me advise every one when he enters into secret to make his Peace with God, that he then call to mind what Company he hath been in, and what hath been done by his Company and Converse. Let us consider the Iniquities of the Vicinage, our Relations, or Persons of our Converse: Some of these may be in some measure ours also; though not our personal Acts. To justifie, to countenance, and take pleasure in Sin committed by another, is not less bad than to do it our selves. Now for this I will give you this Account. It argues more of a depraved Mind: For he that doth it, may be induced by the Temptation of Pleasure, or Profit; but he that takes pleasure in it, sins without a Temptation. To approve of, or take pleasure in what is ill done by another, is a greater Sin than he that doth it is guilty of; because it is with a less Temptation; for they are not induced at all by the Temptation, either of Pleasure or Profit; but these Men are of more havocked Consciences, and more degenerate Minds.

'Tis very likely that these Men have more naturalized themselves to the Malignity of naughty Acts, and have by former base Use, Custom, and

and Practice, alienated themselves from respect toward God, and love of Righteousness: So that they have forced away all the Ingenuity and Modesty of Nature. For to approve of, and take pleasure in the Impudency, Madness and Folly of others, is to sin either upon no, or a less Temptation: Whereas to sin by Weakness, or upon a Temptation, is the only colourable Pretence and Apology. And this is the Account I give for this, that as a Man may be guilty by Participation, where he doth not actually do, so in some Cases, he that doth not do the Act, but takes pleasure in it, may be the Worst of the Two. Dis. XXV.

DIS-

DISCOURSE. XXVI.

The direful Vengeance which falls upon the Souls of Incorrigible Sinners

ROM. 1. *part of the* 24*th. the* 26*th. and the* 28*th.* Verſes.

24*th. Wherefore God alſo gave them up to Uncleanneſs.*

26*th. For this cauſe God gave them up unto vile Affections.*

28*th. And even as they did not like to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind.*

Diſ. XXIV YOU may remember the order and method I propoſed to my ſelf, to treat of the remaining part of the Chapter. Having given you an account of the dreadful *Miſcarriages* of Mortals, who *hold the Truth of God in Unrighteouſneſs*, and *did not love to retain the Knowledge of God in their Minds*, but affected to be Atheiſts; I now come to the *ſecond* part: That is, the Puniſhment of theſe Sinners, and horrid Tranſgreſſors, and that is on God's Part. and you have theſe *forms of Words* to expreſs them. *God gave them up to uncleanneſs: To vile affections: To a reprobate Mind.* But before I ſpeak to that that is conſequent to voluntary conſenting to known iniquity, or groſs neglect of God and themſelves, which are the adequate oppoſites to God, and Religion; I find it

it requiſite for God's Honour, to give you an account what hand God hath, either in the Sin of his Creatures, or in the Sinners Miſery; becauſe it is ſaid, *God gave them up*, &c. This truly hath been one of the hardeſt Queſtions in the World, how evil came into the Creation, ſince God was Good and made all Good? My buſineſs therefore ſhall be to ſhew you, that neither the evil of Sin, nor the evil of Puniſhment is from God. For if God be the firſt and chiefeſt Good, as indeed he is, then Sin is not that that he hath decreed or deſigned; but it is inſeperable from the Miſcarriage of Creatures. I ſhall give you an account of the ſaddeſt place in all the Bible; Where you have it, *Make the Heart of this People fat, and make their Ears heavy, and ſhut their Eyes, leaſt they ſee with their Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and underſtand with their Heart, and convert and be healed.* This place is no leſs than ſix times referred to in the New Teſtament; you have it in all the four Evangeliſts, in the Acts of the Apoſtles, and in the Epiſtle to the *Romans*. The ſix firſt Books in the New Teſtament. To give you ſome account of this. There is an Excellent Diſtinction in one of the Fathers, *Chryſoſtome* he ſaith; *that ſeeing they may ſee, and not perceive*, &c. that is, not that God had any ſuch *Intention*, or that God *would* have it ſo: But ſo it comes to paſs, ſo it falls out, this is the Natural *Iſſue* of Mens not dealing ingenuouſly with Truth; they are the worſe for their Notions. But more of that hereafter. I am now to give you an account, that evil is not to be Attributed to God: yet I find that the Scripture doth frequently Attribute it to him, but you muſt underſtand it thus. Becauſe God is the *firſt Univerſal* and general *Cauſe* of all things, therefore the Scripture Attributes and aſcribes all things that are to him. But when you come to an Explication, there is as vaſt a difference as between God and the

Dif. XXVI

Iſ. 6. 10. "Ινα eſt ex-βατικον, non atman-κον.

Math. 13 15. Mark. 4. 12. Luke. 8. 10. John 12. 40. Acts 28. 27. Rom 11. 8.

Vol. III. Devil, Heaven, and Hell, Light and Darkneſs, Good and Evil. Some things are by his Efficiency, ſome things by his Aſſiſtance, and ſome things by his Permiſſion; that is, he doth not hinder them. For certain we muſt reſolve theſe two things: *Firſt.* That God is no true cauſe of evil: *Secondly.* That he doth what he will, where he will, when he will, how he will, and thinks not fit to hinder it. For nothing is more certain, than Holineſs and Righteouſneſs are the Divine Endowments, and Holineſs and Righteouſneſs make it altogether repugnant and impoſſible for God to have a Hand in evil; whereunto Turpidity, Malignity and Deformity are annexed. If you attribute Malignity, Deformity, Turpitude, the evil of Sin to God, you deny by Moral Endowments, his prime Perfections of Goodneſs, Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs. Wherefore we will abſolutely conclude, that whatſoever God doth, by himſelf immediately, or in conjunction with any ſecond Cauſe, it is throughly Good, and Worthy the firſt and chiefeſt Goodneſs: And if this be not true, let any Man give me an account of theſe places of Scripture. *Is there Unrighteouſneſs with God? God forbid. Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do Right? He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the World in Righteouſneſs.* What doth that intimate? Not by Arbitrary will, but he will proceed according to a certain Rule, ſuch a Rule that is *ſuo jure.* It is a great Queſtion in the Book of *Job*; *God by Power or Priveledge, do that that is not Right and juſt?* There is nothing that the Scripture doth more clearly and fully deny than Unrighteouſneſs in any of the ways of God. It is a gallant ſaying of one of the Fathers: God cannot with Righteouſneſs puniſh things, that by his Commiſſion are done. No one can be there a juſt revenger, where he is an evil Author. Therefore God is not the Author of Evil.

Rom. 9. 14. Gen. 18. 25. Act. 17. 31.

Job 8. 3. *An Deus fortis pervertat juſtitiam? Cujus eſt juſtus ultor, non eſt malus Author.*

In

In purſuing this aſſertion I poſitively lay down two propoſitions. Dis. XXVI.

Firſt. Antecedently to the Being of Evil, God doth what infinite Wiſdom doth direct, or Goodneſs moves, to *Prevent* it: That is, by declaring againſt it, by warning and admoniſhing, by fruſtrations, and croſs providences. And,

Secondly. Subſequent to the Being of Evil, when Evil is done by an accountable Creature, God where he pleaſeth, and when he pleaſeth, in his Infinite Goodneſs, brings good out of it.

Firſt. Antecedently to Evil, God doth what Infinite Wiſdom doth think fit, or Goodneſs moves, to *prevent* it. He doth warn, admoniſh, declare againſt, tho' he doth not chuſe abſolutely to hinder it. Now if any one ſay, but why doth he not engage his Almighty Power abſolutely to hinder evil? Four things in anſwer.

1*ſt.* God is not at all *bound.* No Man can alledge, upon any ground of Reaſon, that God having made a Creature Intelligent, and Voluntary, accountable to him, puniſhable if he do ill, rewardable if he do well, that he ſhould every where interpoſe.

2. Thoſe that are neglectors of God, they do not deſerve it, they cannot claim any ſuch Courteſie from him.

3. It is not at all ſuitable to a Probation-State. We are runners of a race, we work for Eternity, we are now in a preparatory State; how is a Man put upon a Probation, if God by an irreſiſtable Power, ſhould make it impoſſible for him to fall? What exerciſe of Vertue, if God by his irreſiſtable Power make Evil impoſſible?

4. Thus to do is God's peculiar Kindneſs, and Courteſie to thoſe that act in God's Name; that begin with him, and are always ſenſible of God's preſence with them. That for the Firſt.

Secondly. Subsequently to the being of evil, by a defective or a malicious Cauſe, Evil having taken effect, God, where, and when he pleaſeth, in his Infinite Goodneſs, brings *Good out of it.* For ſometimes he cures a Man of high preſumption, pride, and conceit, by ſuffering ſuch a Perſon to fall into a Sin, that brings him to ſhame. *I dare ſay*, ſaith one of the Fathers, *That a proud Man may fall into a Sin that may ſhame him*, and make him ſee himſelf. Since many times, if God let ſuch a Man fall into a Sin, it is to humble him, and this is the Goodneſs of God, when he will bring Good out of Evil, and turn ſuch a Man's Sin to his Advantage.

Audeo dicere ſuperbo, ut incidat in peccatum Aug.

Now that God is no cauſe of Man's Sin, may appear from theſe two things; which it becomes us to averr concerning our Creator.

1. That God doth not deny any neceſſary aid, and aſſiſtance before hand, to any of his Creatures.

2. God doth not *withdraw*, but upon Demerit, Offence, and Provocation: God doth not leave any of his Creatures, before they give him Offence, and firſt Voluntary forſake and leave him.

Non deſerit antequam deſeratur.

He doth not in the *Firſt* place deny neceſſary Help. For I account that providence is as ſure as God. If Providence, then neceſſary Help. And *Secondly*, God doth not withdraw till after provocation, and the Creature firſt forſakes him. I obſerve both in the tranſactions of Communities, and common Affairs of Mankind: Theſe great Truths are acknowledged in Humane things. For in the Arraignment of Malefactors, two things are put in. *Done by Diabolical inſtigation*: And, *not having the fear of God before their Eyes.* Which intimates, *Firſt*, that God keeps all them that keep to him: *Secondly*, thoſe that God leaves, the Devil drives. Theſe two things ſeem to be acknowledged by that that is your Phraſe of Arraignment. There are three Terms proper to make uſe of to explicate this point, *Objective*,

jective, *Permissive*, *Judicial*; for neither of these de- Dis. XXVI.
note any Efficiency on God's part toward evil. All
things do work by way of *Object* with sensible A-
gents; but they work differently, according to
what the Recipient is, what one does in like case,
another does not. If I speak of Temptations, by
way of Object; it is not to be laid upon the Ob-
ject, but the disposition of the Agent: for instance,
Peter and *Judas*: *Peter* through fear denies his Ma-
ster; *Judas* through malice, betrays him. *Judas*,
hath Attrition and Desparation; *Peter* hath Contri-
tion and Repentance. So likewise in *Joseph* and
David: What one takes, another refuses; where one
is ensnared, another comes of with Triumph. So
that here God is excused in Motion, by way of
Object; the effect is not imputed to the Object but
to the Agent. For the second way: *Permissive* con-
curring in the way of *permission*; God is not to be
charged upon this account; because whosoever is
suo juris, hath right of Action, he is not under the
prohibition of another. So that what he doth, is
imputed to himself, as his own choice, and free
Determination; for the Law of Right, and Rule
of Reason are the things endued with Power of
Warrant and Restraint; and so every Agent what-
soever, he is to consider the immutable and un-
changeable Law of Righteousness, Goodness, and
Truth: He is to consider the *Right of the case*, and
the *Reason of the thing*; and so cannot excuse him-
self, that any Power did not hinder: For he be-
ing an Intelligent Agent, and Voluntary; is to be
Governed by the Law of Action: So no account to
be given, that he was permitted, or that no Supe-
riour Power did hinder him. We in our Judicature
leave all Men to their liberty, till there is Convicti-
on: And we never impute that to the Govern-
ment, that a Malefactor doth amiss: But the fault
of the Government is this, when they do not punish

Vol. III. condignly. So that herein is a Man's Sin, that he varies from the Rule of Action. He cannot lay any fault upon any Superiour, that he doth not hinder. We are wont to say, whosoever despiseth God and the Law, he may be Master of another Man's Life, be the Government under which he lives never so watchful, and never so Right: For here is the greatest security that we have for our lives, that the Law does require that Man's Life, that takes away anothers. And this is a necessary circumstance to a Probation-State, It is true, as the Scripture tells us, the Apostate Spirits are kept in Chains of Darkness, because God will not trust us in their Hands: But Men that are in a Probation-State, they are at liberty; and it is necessary to a Probation State, that there be Liberty, and that evil be not unavoidable. But then, *Thirdly*, Judicialiter, as a Judge: Whosoever acts as a Judge, comes after an evil action, for the work of a Judge, is to go according as things are proved. Wherefore the evil is in being, before the work of the Judge is begun. The Judge hath no place till Evil be done, complained of, alledged, and proved, and then he can be no cause of the Fact. For he hath nothing to do, till after the evil is committed. In none of these three ways, we attribute Evil unto God. Therefore this I must say, we must make it good, much more of God, which St. *Paul* saith of himself, *I am free from the Blood of all Men*: And I am sure that God is both free from the Sin of Men and their Misery.

Act. 20. 26.

These three things we must say of God, if we will do him right.

First. That he doth fully answer the Relation he stands in to whatsoever he hath made. Now you that know what belongs to the kindness of a Parent, I put you to judge. *Can a Woman forget her sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her*

Is. 49. 15.

her Womb? Now you know it belongs to a Parent to foresee, and prevent mischief to a Child; and if mischief befals it, to help it out: And what is true of indulgent Parents to their Children, is true of God ten thousand times more. Dis. XXVI.

Secondly. He certainly doth whatsoever is *due* and requisite, in pursuance of the Principles of his Creation, so as to make them effectual: For he is not vain, to begin, and not go on. This we do observe; let any Man attempt to set any thing a-foot, if he do not bring it to a State of Consistency, he loseth his labour; the things return back again. Now for a Man to imagine that God should make a Creature, and give Faculties and Principles, and then deny that that will make that which he hath done effectual, is either to impute to him Rashness in his Undertaking, or else Impotency; I am sure want of Goodness.

Thirdly. It becomes us to think of God that he will do whatsoever becometh infinite *Goodness*: He will answer his Relation; he will do that that is worthy infinite Goodness, and that certainly amounts to this, To do all Good upon the highest, fullest, and cleerest Account of Goodness, if there be not reason to the contrary. But that he should, by his Almighty Power, keep out Evil out of the Creation, there is no reason: It would then be no Probation-State. Wherefore that that the Prophet saith is a most real Truth: *O Israel, thy Destruction is of thy self.* Hos. 13. 9. Wherefore I account it materially Blasphemy, to say these two things of God. (I charge not the Intentions of mistaken Persons) to say, That God is the Cause of the Creatures Sin. Or, *Secondly.* Of the Sinners Misery, by the Absoluteness and Arbitrariness of his Will: As if it were not for God's Will, a Sinner might enjoy himself, be at peace within himself, and be happy

Vol. III. doing what he will; which ſome have been bold to ſay, and more have been apt to think, that ſaving the Prohibition, Good and Evil are both alike. No; as Virtue hath Reward ariſing out of it ſelf, ſo Sin and Wickedneſs hath Puniſhment ariſing out of it ſelf, [*Receiving in themſelves that Recompence of their Error which was meet.*] An inordinate Appetite is its own Puniſhment. No other thing doth draw any thing after it, as Guilt doth Miſchief and Puniſhment. They are things inconſiſtent, for a Man to be under Senſe of Guilt, and to be happy. God need not do any thing, he may but abſent himſelf, and let him alone, and this Man is in Hell by his own Production. The great Heart-ſore, *Cordolium*, is Guilt upon the Conſcience, and Malignity in the Mind, a perverſe and a naughty Spirit; no Wounds of the Body are equal to the Torments of the Mind. A Sinner's Miſery is of his own Creation.

Ἀντμισθίαν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἁπλανβανοντες. *Feciſti domine, & ſic eſt, ut omnis inordinatus Appetitus ſit ſibi ipſi Pœna.*

Now I muſt ſuggeſt to you the Poſitive Cauſe of Evil; and they are theſe Eight; which I will ſpeak but a Word to.

Firſt. Objects may *incline*: For we are all Faculties; and the World is made up of Objects: And all Objects have an attractive Virtue; and it is natural to our Faculties to take Cognizance of Objects.

Secondly. Examples may entice. We are apt to write after Precedents, to do that that is done.

Thirdly. Opportunities may invite. He that never thought of playing the Thief, he is tempted upon a fair Advantage.

Fourthly. Conſtitution may diſpoſe. This is a home-bred Suggeſtion; a Man only by Wiſdom and Vertue overcomes bodily Inclination.

Fifthly. Company may perſwade.

Sixthly

Sixthly. *Evil Angels* may ſeduce. So the Scripture tells us, *That Satan ſtood up againſt Iſrael, and provoked David to number the People.* Dif. XXVI. 1 Chron. 21. 1.

Seventhly. Men themſelves *abuſe* that *Liberty* and Power they hold of God and enjoy under him: For although all Power be explicable for the better, yet it is an abuſe of Power, to do that that is not fit to be done: It is no more than it is in a Paralitick Agility of Motion, when the Man trembles every Joynt, not from nimbleneſs of Spirit, but want of Strength.

Eighthly. Whenſoever Evil takes effect, we may conclude, that God did not think fit to *hinder* it; and this is all I will attribute to God, and all the place I will leave for God in this thing; for if God had hindred it, it had not been.

Now if any Man ask, Why did not God hinder it? I refer him to my Reaſons before, and ask him, How comes God to be bound? Where is God's Courteſie, if he muſt equally conſider them that neglect him, and them that commend themſelves to his Guidance and Ducture? And if he ſhould hinder, he ſhould counterwork the very deſign of his Creation, when he made Man Intelligent and Voluntary, and put him into a Probation State; and bid him act for Eternity. We muſt remember, that Man by his Make, is a free Agent, is both Intelligent and Voluntary; and in this State a Man is under this Barr; he is counterpoized on the one ſide by that that is juſt and honeſt, againſt that that is on the other ſide pleaſurable and profitable: And here is a Man's Counterbalance; looking to God, he is well directed; Looking to the Allurements of Senſe, he is tempted. Now here God taking high Offence, and having juſt Indignation againſt Man's fooliſh Affectation and wilful Choice, whom he made Intelligent and Voluntary, That he ſhould in ſuch an unequal Competition, determine himſelf

ſelf to the worſt, he doth not hinder, but leaves him to the Fruit of his own Wages. Therefore, *Let*
Jam. 1.13. 14. *not any Man ſay, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God, for God cannot be tempted with Evil, neither tempteth he any Man. But every Man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own Hearts Luſt, and enticed.*

The *Inference* I would draw from hence, is,

That we be very cautious how we attribute Evil to God; or, how we charge or entail the Miſery of Men upon him. I dare ſay, it is not poſſible for the Tongue of Man more to diſhonour God, than than thus to do. For this is the Account I give; That the Moral Perfections of God, to wit, his Holineſs, his Righteouſneſs, and Goodneſs, are thoſe *Prime Perfections* of his, by which we are induced to Worſhip God; and we know more of theſe than of his other: For as for his other Perfections, we are confounded when we think of his Omnipotency, Omnipreſence, Infiniteneſs: But for his Moral Perfections, his Holineſs, Righteouſneſs, and Goodneſs, of theſe we have a Participation. Now to attribute the Evil of the World to God, is to deſtroy all theſe Notions: Yea, We may ſay of God, That the Will of God, and the Power, are always in a conjunction with his Moral Perfections; yea, they are determined, limited, guided, and directed by them. This is ſo far true, that even in thoſe things which the World calls Severity in God, they are Acts of Goodneſs and Righteouſneſs. For it is good, that God do coutroul by Puniſhment, Impenitency, and Contumacy in Sin: And it is as well an Act of Goodneſs, by Chaſtiſements to reduce the lawleſs and rebellious, to controul an obſtinate and impenitent Sinner, as it is an Act of Goodneſs to pardon Sin to thoſe that do repent. Now ſince we are ſo charitable, that in a well eſtabliſhed Government, where now and then by accident,

cident, Murthers and Robberies are committed; we do not impute them to the Governour, much leſs ought we to impute the Miſcarriages of Men to God; ſince God hath declared himſelf againſt Ungodlineſs and Unrighteouſneſs of Men; ſince all Sinners know they do amiſs at their own Peril. God gave no ſuch Power unto Men: For Power is concluded within Bounds of Reaſon and Right. Lawleſs and Impotents, are Impotencies and Deformities. Dif. XXVI.

Illud poſſumus quod jure poſſumus. Ad malum non datur poſſe.

Now I ſuperadd here the neceſſity of this Doctrine I have ſo much inſiſted upon. If we attribute Evil to God, theſe four Miſchiefs are likely to follow, which will root up all Religion and Conſcience.

Firſt. We ſhall think of God contrary to what *God is*, and worſe than he deſerves; and then we ſhall leſs love him, and leſs regard him. So we ſhall not repreſent him to our ſelves a lovely Object; for the Fountain of Good is highly lovely; but the Author of Evil is the moſt unlovely Object; and he is not the moſt lovely, unleſs he be the Fountain of Goodneſs.

Secondly. We ſhall not think aright of *Evil*: For if we impute it to God, a Man will ſay, What harm is there in that that God doth?

Thirdly. We ſhall excuſe *our ſelves* more than there is Cauſe for, and ſhall abate in our ſelves the ſenſe of our own Faultineſs: For then we ſhall look upon our ſelves only as God's Inſtruments: And you know the Principal he doth excuſe the Inſtrument.

Fourthly. We ſhall take very little care to *repent*, or revoke any thing unduly done. For who will trouble himſelf about that that he thinks is the Will of God? And a Man will ask himſelf, *Who at any time hath reſiſted his Will?* Rom 9.19

Vol. III. A Word for the latter, and I have done. God is not the primary Cauſe of the Sinner's Miſery. There is no reaſon at all why we ſhould expoſe our ſelves to Temptation, by attributing external Evils to God, more than we have aſſurance of. If we attribute all external Evils to God, then you put an invincible and an intollerable load upon the Vertue of Patience; and Patience muſt bear the load of all. And truly we are not ſo ſubmiſs to God, nor ſo free from Self-love, as to put forth Acts of Patience to ſuch a heigth. This I ordinarily hear, when any thing befals Men, they ſay, *It is the Will of God.* To explicate this. It is true, that God doth exerciſe his Judgments in the World; but yet I will deny two things. *Firſt.* That God doth whatſoever Evil befals Men: And, *Secondly.* I deny that it is true, that all Evil that befals us, is the Puniſhment of Sin: They are neither of them certainly true. It is true, and we have reaſon for it, to attribute the univerſal Deluge to God: The Deſtruction of *Sodom* to God; for it is ſaid God did it. We have cauſe to attribute to God the ſudden death of *Nadab* and *Abihu*: The Deſtruction of *Corah*, *Dathan* and *Abiram*; of *Ananias* and *Saphira*: For it is aſcribed to God, and the Cauſe aſſigned. But it doth not follow that *All* the Evils that befal us, are the immediate Hand of God. For, *Firſt.* Some of them may follow upon the condition of the Matter, juſt as Ruſt follows the Nature of Iron. *Secondly.* Some brought upon our ſelves, by our neglect, or abuſe of our ſelves: As the Diſeaſes that follow upon Intemperance, or the Harms that follow upon violent and unnatural Motion. Or, *Thirdly*, Some are the Effects of malicious Cauſes, for which God will challenge accountable Agents. Now therefore ſince there are other Cauſes, How doth it expoſe Men to Temptation? How doth it miſrepreſent God to Men, to attribute *all the Evil* that

Gen. 7. Gen. 19. Numb. 3. Numb. 16. Acts 5.

Sequi ex conditione Naturæ, ſicut rubigo conſequitur ferrum.

that befals them to God's immediate Hand? It is very true, that God hath this Power: but for the Exercise of this Power, to say it is certeinly God's work, whatsoever the second Causes be, this is that which I reprove. Wherefore let us entartain good Thoughts of God, as much as may be; that we may be encouraged to repent, and have Faith and Confidence in him; and do not attribute that to God, which we have no assurance is the immediate Hand of God; but only God did not interpose; as where it follows the Nature of the matter; or brought upon our selves by our neglect, or abuse of our selves; or where foreign Agents have done us a mischief. No, you may imagine that God hath created second Causes, and doth permit things to go according to the Nature of Second Causes; and he doth interpose when he will. But, with very great caution, attribute things that are grievous to God; but recommend God as lovely, and the Object of Love, as much as possibly you can. For since God is not the Author, or Cause of the Creatures Sin, but that the greatest Evils of Sinners arise from themselves; and for that the Evils that befal us, may be attributed to other Causes: Therefore let us not without cause, throw them upon God. Dis. XXVI.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXVII.

The direful Vengeance which falls upon the Souls of Incorrigible Sinners

ROM. 29.

Being filled with all Unrighteousness, Fornication, Wickedness, Covetousness, Maliciousness, full of Envy, Murder, Debate, Deceit, Malignity, Whisperers, &c.

Disc. XXVII.

IN the Words you have the ultimate Issue of the horrid, monstrous State of degenerate Mortals. The very reading of this Catalogue is enough to startle any Body, and make him considerative of his danger, to betake himself to Religion, that he may be delivered from such abominations. One would wonder that Humane Nature should admit of them, that such Villianies should be reported of one that is an Intelligent and Voluntary Agent; I had need almost to Apologize for reading such a Text in the Ears of a Christian Auditory: And were not this in the Bible, I durst not be so uncharitable: And had I not spoken of several things in the Chapter before, I should not have singled out this alone. I intend not in my discourse, to make a discovery concerning Wickedness in these various expressions: I am very well aware the World well understands what is meant by these Words: My intention therefore is either not at all to speak, or very little save here and there. But here is one of this Catalogue

logue I have ſingled out to ſpeak of, becauſe it is a very cunning and ſubtile Evil; but deadly dangerous, and requires ſome accurateneſs: And that is, *Coveteouſneſs*. You may ſuſpect it ſhrewdly by the Company it keeps: Nothing in all the Scripture is more branded, nothing in all the Scripture put into worſe Company. I find it very ill ſpoken of in Scripture; it is put in an adequate oppoſition to all Religion. *Incline my Heart unto thy Teſtimonies, and not to Covetouſneſs.* It is a Principle of the baſeſt Practice, for it hardens it ſelf to any purpoſe. *Through Covetouſneſs ſhall they with feigned words make Merchandize of you.* And when our Saviour tells us of thoſe things that defile, and tells that nothing without us or about us defiles us (and yet we find many that pretend to Religion are greatly troubled with things without them, and about them but) amongſt theſe things that defile, is this Covetouſneſs. *For from within out of the Hearts of Men proceed evil thoughts, Adulteries, Fornications, Murders, Thefts, Covetouſneſs*, &c. *All theſe evil Things come from within and defile the Man.* It is alſo a thing of a very ill quality: For the Apoſtle ſaith, *it is Idolatry*, *Col.* 3. 5. *Covetouſneſs which is Idolatry.* Nothing is more threatned in all the Book of God. *O thou that dwelleſt upon many Waters, abundant in Treaſures, thine end is come, and the meaſure of thy Covetouſneſs. The Covetous whom God abhorreth.* And then there is a promiſe of long Life where Covetouſneſs is excluded; *He that hateth Covetouſneſs ſhall prolong his Days.* And we are warned againſt Covetouſneſs, and told, *It is the Root of all evil.* For the *Love of Money is the root of Evil, which while ſome have coveted after they have*, &c. Yea, it hath ſo much of Malignity in it, that if any Man pretend to Religion and be covetous, we are warned to have nothing to do with him. *If any Man that is called a Brother be Covetous, with ſuch a one, no not to eat.* And I the rather

Diſc. XXVII.

Pſ. 119. 36.

2 Pet. 2. 3.

Mar. 21. 22, 23.

Jer. 51. 13.

Pſal. 10. 3.

Prov. 28. 16.

1 Tim. 6. 10.

1 Cor. 5. 11.

chooſe

chooſe out this, becauſe you ſee how dangerous it is, how diſpleaſing to God, how miſchievous to Men. And yet it is the hardeſt matter in the World, to perſuade Man that had a touch of it, that he is Guilty; he hath ſo many pretences, ſo many ſhifts. This Covetouſneſs it doth ſhelter it ſelf under honeſt Names. It is ſometimes thought to be Prudence, Cautiouſneſs, Warineſs, and Good-Huſbandry. So Men ruine themſelves by entertaining this viper under another Name and notion.

I will now make ſome diſcovery of it; and for that I will go this way to work, to ſhew you what in our Saviours ſenſe is oppoſite to the Spirit of Covetouſneſs. For I am of Opinion, that our Saviour in his Beatitudes, hath one of them that is expreſly againſt Covetouſneſs: And that is this, *Bleſſed are the Poor in Spirit.* I am very well aware, our Divines have put another ſenſe upon theſe Words. I heartily cloſe with their ſenſe, but that that they faſten upon this, I find it elſewhere in the 5th verſe, *Bleſſed are the meek.* But I take this according to the Letter, the Word in the Greek is Emphatical, Οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι, They that are ſatisfied with mean and ordinary things: For this you muſt know, that a Man may be *poor in Spirit*, and yet have a competency; and a Man may be poor in Eſtate, and yet Covetous in Heart. You may have a Rich Man that hath an affluent Eſtate, poor in Spirit; and you may have the meaneſt Man alive covetous in Heart, by immoderate and inordinate Deſires: For a Man may have an unſatiable deſire in a low and mean condition. So that let not poor Men think that they are out of danger: For he is *poor in Spirit*, that hath his Mind looſe to, or above the World. I find Interpreters generally carry it to humbleneſs of Mind, or *content in* our ſelves. And ſo make it comply with this Scripture, *Iſaiah* 66. 2. *To this Man will I look, even to him that is poor and*

of

of a contrite Spirit, and trembleth at my word. I believe these have a place in the number of our Saviours Beatitudes in another Verse: *Blessed are the meek.* Now this same Meekness doth not only import gentleness, sweetness and affability toward Men, but every degree of Humility and Subjection toward God. But this other I interpret of Men, who though they have great Estates they have Moderate desires and do not run out into an inordinacy. I know the Church of *Room* produceth this place for a Device of their own, for one of the three Vows, the Vow of Poverty, which they say, with the Vows of a single Life, and regular Obedience, makes up a State of Perfection. This therefore I account to be true Poverty of Spirit, if a Man have the Worlds good, and yet his Heart leans not to it: If he have it not, he hath no inordinate desire of it; a disposition of Mind so equally setled, as not to affect worldly pomp, or state, or greatness, or revenue; not to be under the command of the *Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, and the Pride of Life,* which in St. *Johns* Language, is the account of the *World.* But if this Man have the Worlds good, yet in his Heart he leans not to it, nor doth he estimate himself by it: If he have it not, he doth not so thirst after it as to do any thing exorbitant to get it, or if he have lost it he is not so moved at the loss as to be disquieted at it: So that assure your selves a Man may be Rich in outward Estate, and yet poor in Spirit; if he doth not love it and estimate himself by it; and he may be the contrary, though in a low condition, if he be of an unsatiable appetite: Poor, and have a little share in the World and yet not *poor in Spirit.* For it is not a Man's external circumstances that makes a Man either Vertuous or Vitious, but the Frame Constitution and Complexion of the Mind. These poor in Spirit are those that are so upon *consideration*, having considered that

Disc. XXVII.

1 Joh. 2. 16.

ὁ πτωχὸς ἐκ περιεργίας ὡς S. Basil.

Vol. III.

Qui habere cupiunt, sanata voluntate pauperos non sunt. St. Aug.

few of these that are necessary in Life: That the Happiness of Man consists not in abundance, that these are but in the place of Means, not of ends; and so will not be under the Power of them; for no Good-Man nor Wise-man will be under the Power of any thing, that hath not the order of an end. Whosoever hath the Command of the World, and hath it in his Hands, as a Mean in order to an End; this Man, though he be Rich, may be Poor in Spirit; and he that is poor, if he be a Man that is unsatisfied, and maintains greedy Appetites, he may be the contrary. He that hath in himself, upon consideration, resolved that Riches, and Honour, and Revenue, are nothing, farther than they are Accommodations, or upon the Account of their being Instruments: This is the Man that, though he be Rich, he is not Covetous. So that we find, though this Word be cast only upon Men that are Men of Estates; yet the poorer sort are also as liable and obnoxious hereunto. He that determined in the Sense of his Soul, that the Life of Man doth *not consist in the abundance of what he doth enjoy* (as our Saviour expresses it in *Luke* 12. 15.) And that Riches are but a multitude of Instruments, and that the Virtue of an Instrument lies in the use and exercise of it: He that upon consideration

Prov. 13, 8.

desires of God, as *Agar* did, *Give me neither Poverty nor Riches, but feed me with Food convenient*; this Man is *poor in Spirit*.

But this I observe, That Men sometimes that are under the Power of Covetousness, when the World doth not gratifie them, then in haste, upon discontent, they bid defiance, *adieu* to the World. So *Charles* the Fifth did, when by attempting many things, he had plunged himself into a multitude of Inconveniencies, and brought himself into a Maze, that he knew not the way out; then he

resolve

resolves of resigning up all his Estate; his Empire to his Brother, his Kingdom to his Son; and he betakes himself to a Monastery. But here the World rather leaves them in this Case, than they leave the World. As St. *Jerome* hath a good Saying: The great Power of renouncing the World, and being loose to the World, is shewn when Men do it voluntarily, not in Necessity, not in Anger, not in a Spirit of Revenge. If we would approve our selves to be poor in Spirit, and out of Love with this World, Let us do it when the World favours us, not when the World frowns upon us: While the World as yet follows us, and, as it were, wooes us for our Love: Not when it is grown froward, and turns its Back upon us. I intimated it to you at first, that this is a cunning and subtle Vice: You see I have discovered one Instance; and now another: In the Church of *Rome* they are constrained who enter into Religious Orders, to make a Triple Vow, the Vow of regular Obedience, Poverty, and a single Life; but, alas, how little is there of the Persons choice in it! One of their own, writing of the Free Vows, calls it *Terrible votum paupertatis.* But whosoever dedicates himself to God, must in heart leave this World, and cast no longing favourable Eye upon Wealth, Honour or Preferment; but must resolve to live in converse with this World, as if in Society with the Inhabitants of the other World. Disc. XXVII. πολιτευμα ἐν οὐρανοῖς

But now I seem to tell a Riddle: To tell Men they must not value and estimate themselves by their Place, Worth, and Estate. Truly this is so contrary to the Guize of the World, that it is little expected, but that he that speaks thus to Men, should be looked upon, as *Lot* was by his Sons-in-law (*Gen.* 14. 19.) speaking to them about leaving *Sodom*; *he spake as one who mocked*

Whoſo finds in himſelf an Inclination toward the World, a deſire to grow Rich, and to raiſe himſelf in Power and Preferment; let him ſuſpect himſelf. 'Tis Wiſdom to fear all things, even though things be ſafe within, to cenſure ſecret Paſſages, and ill Inclinations of the Heart.

In foro interiori in foro Conſcientiæ ſatius eſt præſumere delictum, quam non delictum. Camneſtra.

I never find in all the Book of God that *Riches* are mentioned and well ſpoken of; or that the Rich are declared Bleſſed: But I find it is ſaid, *They hardly enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 19. 23. It is an excellent Speech of St. *Auguſtine*'s; If it had been ſafe to have been in love with the things of the World, that Man would have loved them, who was the Son of God: But our Saviour affected neither Command nor Authority, nor Eſtate, nor Applauſe. Now if they were in ſuch a Conjunction with Happineſs, why ſhould our Saviour ſo much overlook them, and the Apoſtles write after his Copy? for we find them not ſollicitous after more than neceſſary Accommodations. If we do not, through the help of Divine Grace, alienate our ſelves from the love of the things of the World, the love of them will certainly alienate us from God. If no Truſt and Confidence in them, there will be no Inordinacy toward them; which where it is, the Heart will be ſtollen from God. I read in the *Roman* Story, of a Stateſman that had been no leſs than a *Dictator*: He was grievouſly cenſured for having but one piece of Plate. It is a horrible Reproach to us, if the Faith of the Goſpel ſhall not attain ſuch an effect, as the uſe of Reaſon in Conjunction with Infidelity, hath done. Now to reſolve you what is that in reality, what is that that is the Top and principal part we call the Worſhip of God: Is it not to have a Dependance upon him? a Truſt and Confidence in his Providence, and not to be anxious what a day may

Et levis argentis lamina crimen erat. Hæc in ſugillationem noſtri dicta ſint, ſi non præſtat Fides, quod exhibuit Infidelitas. Hierm.

may produce? and can you do this, while you are ſolicitous after the World, and have a dependance upon your Eſtates, Power or Place? God is to be referred to, as our Original, and reſted in as our Centre. Wherein do we Honour God, more than by truſting in him and depending upon him? Now, if we put this Truſt and Confidence, and Dependance in our Riches, or Eſtates, we put them in the place of God, and upon this account it is called *Idolatry*, *Col.* 3. 5. Diſc. XXVII.

For my part nothing in the Church of *Rome* doth ſo much grieve me, as to ſee Men ſo baſe as to *practice upon Religion*, and lay worldly Deſigns; name God, and Mean the World: And this is that that is abominable in the Church of *Rome*: What vaſt Sums do they acquire by many of their Principles and Doctrines? As of Purgatory, Indulgencies and Abſolution, and the like? *But the love of Mony is the Root of all Evil, which while ſome coveted after they have erred from the Faith.* *Eraſmus*, writing upon the Story of St. *Peters* mean entertainment by *Simon* the Tanner, obſerves, that now the Palaces of Emperours and Courts of Kings are not ſufficient for St. *Peters* Succeſſours. 1 Timo. 6. ch. 10. *At nunc tria Regum Palatia non ſufficiunt*

But I remember Generals do not at all affect, and this being a buſineſs practical, every Bodies concernment; a Man is concerned as he would ſecure his Soul to Eternity, to quit and diſcharge himſelf of this Covetouſneſs; as that that doth diſplace God in the Throne of Man's Soul. Therefore in particular I will ſhew you in *five* Particulars, who we may conclude is troubled with this Diſeaſe and tainted with this Vice of Covetouſneſs.

First, Whoſoever he is, being a Perſon *of eager*, inordinate, ungoverned Appetites; and therefore doth not ſatisfie himſelf with the diſpoſition of Divine

Vol. III. Providence in reſpect of himſelf, which Providence doth furniſh him with Conveniences and Accomodations of Life. If not ſatisfied therein, he is Covetous.

Secondly, who having enough for Neceſſary Uſe, and purpoſes of Life, fears to ſpend, he covets rather to *have* than to uſe, he doth even Grudge to himſelf things fitting, he hath not Power to Uſe himſelf kinkly in the World. This Man is Covetous.

Thirdly, who makes himſelf a Drudge in the World, toils Day and Night; breaks his Sleep through inordinate Care: He is ſo extreamly buſie, ſo over employed, as not to be at leiſure duly to attend upon God in the World.

Fourthly, who through his baſe Love of Money, as if it were conjoyned with his very Being, hath not Power of equal conſideration, in his dealing with others; but inſiſts to the utmoſt upon all points of advantage, and ſtrict Right; affording no abatement, no allowance for the ſeveral contingencies that befal Men.

Fifthly, who over-rules Principles of Reaſon and Conſcience, and uſeth all means to become Rich, without difference, or diſtinction; Right or wrong, lawful or unlawful. This Man is prodigiouſly Covetous: This is Covetouſneſs in the higheſt degree.

Of theſe five I will ſpeak; and by theſe every Man may try himſelf. I begin at the loweſt degree, and ſtill in the ſeveral Particulars, riſe one ſtep higher.

First, Whoſoever he is, being a Perſon of Eager, Inordinate Ungoverned Appetites, that doth not ſatisfie himſelf with the Diſpoſition of Providence, concerning himſelf; furniſhing him with conveniences and accommodations of Life, but more he would

would have; this is that the Pſalmiſt calls, *Meat for Men's Luſts*, *Pſal.* 78. 18. Whatſoever is more fit, convenient and neceſſary, and is the effect of the ordinary diſpoſition of Providence toward a Man; if a Man will not be content and ſatisfied, he deſires *Meat for his Luſts*. Every Man is to be ſatisfied with the diſpoſition of Providence, if it be convenient, and neceſſary; if he be not, he is Covetous. This was the temper of *Rachel*, *Give me Children or elſe I die*. See what follows, ſhe had Children, and is the firſt Perſon that *died in Childbed*. *The Life of Man doth not conſiſt in the abundance he doth enjoy*, and to think otherwiſe, this is expreſly contrary to the Apoſtles Rule: *I have learned in whatſoever State I am therewith to be content*. And in 1 *Tim.* 6. *Ch.* 6. 7. *Verſes*, *But Godlineſs with Contentment is great Gain: For we brought nothing into this World, and it certain we can carry nothing out*. And ſince we are to carry nothing out, why ſhould any Man deſire more than will ſerve his turn? and *verſe* 8*th*. 9*th*. 10*th*. *And having Food and Raiment; let us be therewith content: But they that will be Rich, fall into Temptation and a Snare, and into many fooliſh and hurtful Luſts which drown Men in deſtruction and perdition: For the Love of Money is the Root of all Evil, which while ſome coveted after they have erred from the Faith, and pierced themſelves through with many Sorrows*. The like we have in *Hebrews* 13. 15. *Let your converſation be without Covetouſneſs, and be content with ſuch things as you have; for he hath ſaid, I will never leave thee nor forſake thee*. And pray obſerve, he there gives a general Reaſon, and quotes a Speech ſpoken to *Joſhua*; which offers this, if we do what is reaſonable, and according to our ſtation, God looks upon himſelf concerned to do that for us, which is anſwerable to his Relation to us. This I obſerve from theſe words, and this is the firſt, Men of

Diſc. XXVII.

Gen. 30. 1.

Phil. 4. 11.

Joſh. 1. 5.

Vol. III. Eager, Inordinate, ungovered Appetites are Covetous.

Secondly, Who having enough for neceſſary Uſes, fears to ſpend, and grudges himſelf things fitting, He is Covetous. One would think there were no ſuch Men, But *Solomon* hath told us *there is*

Eccl. 4. 8. *one alone, and there is not a ſecond; yea he hath neither Child, nor Brother; yet is there no end of all his Labour, neither is his Eye ſatisfied with Riches, neither ſaith he, for whom do I Labour, and bereave my Soul of good?* Wanting to himſelf, and wanting to publick Occaſions, for this we are to note, that the publick is every Man's concern: For if it be not every Bodies, it is no Bodies: A Man muſt not be wanting to the Publick. But he that hath, and allows not himſelf the Power of free and noble Uſe of what he hath, this Man is a ſlave to his Mony, and is of a Covetous diſpoſition, he hath, but hath not the Power of Uſe.

Thirdly, Who makes himſelf a Drudge in the World, toils Day and Night, and is not at leiſure to attend upon God in the World. I think it is Main and Principle in the Life of Man, that Intellectual Natures do perform Specifick Duties to God: Nothing is more horrid than intellectual Natures degenerating into ſenſe: This Man is prodigiouſly Covetous, that ſo racks himſelf with care to get the things of this World, that he forgets God. But here I acknowledge that moderate Care is to be uſed;

1 Tim. 5. 8. for he that *doth not provide for his Family, is worſe than an Infidel.* We ſhould not give way therefore to a lazy ſluggiſh diſpoſition, for he that will not labour, is not ſo much as the Object of any Man's

2 Tit. 3. 10. Charity. So that I am not about to take any Man off from his particular Employment: But I muſt ſay, the Drudgery of the World, is not that that is the proper employment of intellectual Natures; but it is indiſpenſibly neceſſary that Mind and Underſtanding,

ſtanding, which is a peculiar Faculty to be employed about God, that it be ſo employed. This I am ſure is ſo certain, that nothing is more; that there is no Happineſs for Man, but in his Relation to, and conjunction with God and things Immortal: For there is no rational ſatisfaction. In other things a Man may be nauſeated, upon long continuance; but there is no real ſatisfaction. Therefore for Men to Depreſs their noble Powers and Faculties and make their adequate Employment in the Drudgeries of the World, this is ſordid and baſe. Diſc. XXVII.

Fourthly, Who through his baſe love of Mony, as if it were conjoyned with his very Being, hath not Power of Conſideration of others, but inſiſts to the utmoſt upon all points of advantage, affording allowance for unexpected contingencies that befal Men in this Life. For notwithſtanding obligation, a Man is to conſider and make allowance: For ſince there are contingencies beyond the Power of any finite Creature, it becomes every one that hath the advantage, to make fair allowance for unavoidable Contingencies. I am ſure that Man that doth not, he doth not write after God's Copy, who fails not to commiſerate in all compaſſionable Caſes: This Man doth down right violate the Golden Rule of Charity, *To do to others as we would be done unto*: This Man therefore is extreamly *Covetous* who doth not reſerve to himſelf a Power of equal conſideration. To this Perſon all other Men are but as means, Inſtruments to his ends and purpoſes. He ſays, if I be a loſer no matter what becomes of things, In this caſe Self is predominant, all other conſiderations are ſubſervient thereto.

ἐμὲ θανοῦσι γαῖα μίχθητω πρὶν.

Fifthly, Who doth Over-rule the Law of Reaſon, Religion and Conſcience; and takes all Courſes, and uſeth all means to become Rich, without difference, or diſtinction, either of right, or wrong, lawful, or unlawful; this Man is Covetous to the heighth:

heighth: This Man is formed into the Spirit of Covetouſneſs: This is *the Man that haſtens to be Rich, and will not be Innocent*, *Pro.* 28. 20. This *is he that falls into many ſnares*, for he hath Power to Subordinate God, Religion, Conſcience, and whatſoever is ſacred to Worldly Profit; as *Judas*, who ſold his Maſter: *Balaam*, who loved the ways of Unrighteouſneſs: The *Phariſees*, who were covetous, (*Luke* 16. 14.) and devoured Widdows Houſes, (*Luke* 20. 47.) *Ahab* to get *Naboth*'s Vineyard, (1. *Kings* 21. 1.) &c. Was guilty of Subordination and Murder.

If any one can acquit himſelf in theſe Particulars, he is none of thoſe that the Scripture brands for Covetous.

Now a word of *Inferrence*. The Exhortation is, that we endeavour to Refine, Enable and Spiritualize our Temper; that is, let every Perſon Univerſalize himſelf, that is, employ himſelf as he has opportunity, in things that tend to God's Honour and Glory, in the World, and the publick Good. Let him not ſatiſfie himſelf to do as the Snail does, that confines himſelf to his Shell, and carries his Houſe on his Back, wherever he goes. It doth not become a Man that is indued with an Intellectual Nature, to be ſo ſelfiſh. Let us keep from all ſordidneſs of Mind, that is, by coming under the Power of the World. I would have no worldly thing exerciſe any Authority over Men's Minds; or for a Man to Centre himſelf in himſelf. To this purpoſe I propoſe the conſideration of three things.

Firſt. The Dignity, Value and Worth, of our precious and immortal Souls.

Secondly. The undervalue of all things in the World, in competition.

Thirdly. The *Reference* of the Affairs of time to Eternity; for upon that account the Tranſactions of time, are moſt conſiderable.

To

To do otherwiſe imports three horrid deformities.

First. A ſubordination of Mind, to Body. Which is more prodigious, than if the Sun ſhould ceaſe to ſhine, and fill the World with Stench and Darkneſs.

Secondly. It imports the preference of Tranſitories and Periſhibles before Immortals and Incorruptibles: And this is Child-like, to prefer Pebbles before Pearls.

Thirdly. It doth import the ſuppoſing the Conſequence of *this State*, to be before, and beyond the *other State*, the State of Eternity, and that is madneſs ſo to do.

Now none of theſe three any one will be guilty of, unleſs he be either ſtupid, as never awakened to any competency of Judgment; and then he is inconſiderable, he is not able to give a voice, or ſuffrage; he is not valuable in the order of Humane Nature: For he doth not act by the Principles of Humane Nature; or elſe he is drowned in ſenſualities and brutiſhneſs; and then he is worſe: For the former is by neglect, this is by abuſe. Or, *Thirdly.* He is under a Principle of *affected Atheiſm*; that he may not be under the Obligations of Reaſon, Religion and Conſcience. Now if we will not own the State and Principles of theſe Men, let us not degenerate with them into Practice!

I have but one thing more, and I have done; for I do not mean to ſpend my time in raking in this Sink: But this one thing give me leave to take notice of, that where the Apoſtle here reckons up the Deſperate Degeneracy of Men that live in oppoſition to God, pray obſerve how many Places, and how many Names one Sin doth take up: No leſs than Twelve; all of a Nature, Quality, and ſort, *Being filled with all Unrighteouſneſs, Maliciouſneſs, full of Envy, Murther, Debate, Malignity, Whiſperers,*

Vol. III. *perers, Backbiters, Deſpiteful, inventers of evil Things, without natural Affection, Implacable, Unmerciful,*. So that two Thirds of theſe Malign Characters lye upon this, the want of Charity, Love, and Good-will, Chriſtian Affection: That is, doing that that is unworthy of Humane Nature; for this is Connatural to every Species, to conſult the good of thoſe that are of the ſame Kind: No Species of things doth prey upon its own Kind. From hence I obſerve, by how many Titles Ill-will is Characterized: How many ways we Sin againſt Charity. The Scripture lays much of the ſtreſs of Religion upon Principle of Good-Will, Nature, and upon Charitable Diſpoſition. *If thou loveſt not thy Brother whom thou haſt ſeen, how canſt thou* once think thou *loveſt God whom thou haſt not ſeen?*

1 John. 4. 20.

An account in three Particulars, why the Scripture lays ſuch ſtreſs upon this diſpoſition.

Firſt. It is of Principal uſe and ſubſervience to God's Government in the World, whether in his own hands or in the Hands of his Inſtruments. For if this Princple of Good-Nature did Rule in the World there would be no difficulty in God's Goevrnment. The greateſt difficulty to Government is occaſioned from the Frowardneſs, Wrathfulneſs, and Devilliſhneſs of one Man toward another. If Men did but to others, as they would have others do to them; Government would find a great diſcharge of trouble. No wonder then that Scripture lays ſuch ſtreſs upon *this* Diſpoſition.

Secondly. It is the reſentment on our part of God's Goodneſs, and Kindneſs and Compaſſion to us, in Pardoning us in *Jeſus Chriſt*; which is God's fulleſt Communication to the World. And thoſe that are willing to Relieve, Gratifie, and Supply; theſe are under the fulleſt Communication of God in the World. Great Reaſon therefore that Scripture ſhould

ſhould lay ſuch great Streſs upon *this* Principle of Good-Nature.

Thirdly. Unleſs exerciſed in the Practice of it *here*, we ſhall be no ways Qualified to become Citizens of the Heavenly *Jeruſalem* hereafter. Since therefore it is the utmoſt improvement, to be charitable, and a neceſſary Qualification of a Soul for the Heavenly *Jeruſalem*, and ſtate of Glory; you cannot wonder that Scripture ſhould lay ſuch ſtreſs upon it; and that in this Catalogue of Miſcarriages, where there be eighteen Titles or Names, the miſcarriage in this Inſtance of Love, and Good-will ſupplies Twelve.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXVIII.

The direful Vengeance which falls upon the Souls of Incorrigible Sinners

ROM. 1. *the latter part of the* 27*th* Verse.

----Receiving in themselves that Recompence of their Errour which was meet.

Disc. XXVIII.

THis is the last Clause in this Chapter, that I shall take upon me to speak to: And this containing Matter of great Use, and in farther Assurance of the Truth I have formerly spoken to, I cannot overlook it.

You may remember I have undertaken a Vindication of the Divine Goodness and Righteousness; and have endeavoured to make it appear, that God is neither the Cause of the Creatures Sin, nor the Creatures Misery: And whosoever thinks otherwise of God, doth not God so much as common Right: He doth not say so much of God, as one would think fit to speak of a Man of common Honesty and Uprightness. This Portion of Scripture will give me great advantage to this purpose, that God is not to be charged with the Creatures Sin, or the Creatures Misery. For whosoever suffers, he doth but *receive in himself*, or *from himself*, *that Recompence of his Error which is meet.* The greatest Suffering that is, is not of God's Creation: For God did not make Hell; but it is the natural Issue of Crea-

Creatures Miſcarriage; being wanting to themſelves, and contradicting the Principles of God's Creation in them: And if this be true, I have at once ſaid enough to juſtifie God's Goodneſs and Holineſs; and to ſtop the Mouth of all Gainſayers. No one that fails or miſcarries comes to Miſery by any foreign Pleaſure, any thing that is Arbitrary: But the Miſery that befals the Creation of God, is of our ſelves, it ariſeth from within; Sinners deſtroy themſelves. Men ſhall not be able finally to fly in God's Face, and to challenge him either with Neglect or hard Meaſure; for all that periſh ſhall be ſelf-condemned; and it will finally be made to appear, that whoſoever is loſt, or periſheth, it is through his own Self-neglect, or the great Abuſe of himſelf.

Diſc. XXVIII.

Quicunque læditur, à ſeipſo læditur.

But I am very well aware that it hath been a very old practice, for Men to excuſe themſelves, and lay the Fault on God. The whole eighteenth Chapter of *Ezekiel* is ſpent upon this occaſion; and God by the Prophet doth there vindicate himſelf; and the Prophet in the Name of God doth plainly aſſert, that God is no Contriver of, nor *hath any Pleaſure in the Death of a Sinner*, but that he hath done what infinite Wiſdom hath thought fit, to divert him from Sin, and thereby to keep him from Miſery. It is moſt certain the greateſt Puniſhment is inherent in Sin it ſelf: For let all Power, let a Sinner alone, he would be his own Deſtroyer.

I ſhall be able from this Text to clear God, and lay the Fault at our own Door: I may in this caſe ſay, as the Apoſtle ſaith in *Rom.* 3. 4. in another caſe, *Let God be true, and every Man a Lyar.* In this particular: let God be juſtified, as the Lover of his Creature; but every one that periſheth, is the Author of his own Miſery. So true it is what the Prophet ſaith, *Hoſea* 13. 9. *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed*

stroyed thy self. Whosoever is hurt, is hurt by himself: Inordinate Appetite is a Punishment it self. Now this appears thus, by an account of three of the greatest Evils that we are capable of; Guilt in the Conscience: Malignity and Naughtiness in the Mind: A sickly Diseased Distempered Body.

Inordinatus appetitus est sibi ipsi Pœna.

For the *First* of these, *Guilt* in the Conscience. This is only consequent upon known and voluntary Acts; when they are Irregular, Unnatural, Monstrous, contrary to the order of Reason, so contrary to the Nature of Man, as Man is a Man: which is the great Rule, and Notion of Deformity: and there can no Guilt come upon any Man's Conscience but this way: It is consequent upon his own knowing, and voluntary acts, when they are Irregular, Unnatural, contrary to the order of Reason, contrary to the Nature of Man, as Man is a Man: If he doth contrary to these, then he is Guilty. For this we may conclude, that no forreign Power whatsoever, not the Almighty Power of God, nor the Power of Angels can make any Man Guilty, but by his own knowing and voluntary Consent, for if we consent not, 'tis not our Act. Therfore this great Evil of Guilt in his Conscience is his own Product: and God hath no hand at all in it; but Man is the sole Cause himself. For be he tempted never so much, if he be not Voluntary in Consent, he cannot contract Guilt in his Conscience. This is the first Evil, and this depends upon a Man's self; and no external Power can be the cause of Guilt upon any Man's Conscience. For if a Man be not Intelligent and Voluntary; what he doth is not a Humane Act, it doth not proceed from Judgment, and choice; and therefore it is not imputed to him.

Non est actus Moralis qui non est actus Humanus.

Non est actus Humanus qui non proficiscitur a judicio Rationis & a libertate Arbitrii.

But, *Secondly.* Malignity and Naughtiness in the Mind. And this is Moral Pravity; and Deformity, and

and therefore it cannot be Natural but acquired. Morals are not by Generation but depend upon Acts, Uſe, Cuſtom, and Practice. We are not born with Habits, but only with Faculties. This is ſo far true, that no bodily indiſpoſition, or inclination, which is not acquired, is fully, *in ſpecie vitii aut Virtutis*, good or evil: For nothing is Virtue but what is the product of a Mind actually conſidering, and what is choice upon this conſideration. Sure I am, that God cannot in the leaſt be charged as the cauſe of the naughtineſs of any Man's Mind; neither can it be otherwiſe than from the Man's ſelf: No Creature under Heaven wrought him into that, but his own groſs Self-neglect, or voluntary Self-abuſe: And if there hath been Self-neglect, he hath not then made Uſe of the Principles of God's Creation in him; and if he have abuſed himſelf, whoſe fault is that? Whatſoever is not of a Mans ſelf, it may be his Burthen, but it never is his Fault. That is the ſecond. Then, Diſc. XXVIII.

Thirdly. For a ſickly, diſeaſed, diſtempered Body. That is the third evil I inſtanced in. For this I will grant in the firſt place, that a Man may have an unhappy Conſtitution, he may be born to it, and no fault of his. But things there are, that are to our Power, miſchievous to our Bodies: I will ſingle out three ſorts of Vices. In *Pride*, in Envy, and Malice; Intemperance and Wantonneſs; Idleneſs, Lazyneſs, and Sloath: Theſe three Vices ſpoil the Body. Of theſe Men we may truly ſay with the Apoſtle, *they Sin againſt their own Bodies.* 1 Cor. 6. 18.

Firſt. For *Pride*, Envy, and Malice. They that are Proud, Envious, and Malicious, they frequently are in diſcontent. Now diſcontent doth Macerate the Body, and Melancholizes the Blood. Now if any Man will be offended, he ſhall be offended every Day: For this World is very uncertain and unequal, and ſo affords frequent Natures. The Proud-

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and conceited Man, he never hath eſteem enough. No Man thinks ſo well of him, as he thinks of himſelf; and therefore he is neceſſarily aggrieved at every Body; he is ſeldom ſatisfied, but is apt to interpret every Man's Behaviour toward him, Neglect at leaſt, if not Affront. You have this temper well expreſſed in *Haman* and *Mordecai*. The envious, and malicious, they are aggrieved at every Good, but their own: They cannot be ſatisfied though God be good to them; but this is their Offence, that God is good to others as well as to them. Now I take it for granted, whoſoever leads a grumbling, and a repining Life, as Envy, and Malice makes Men to live; this Man's Life is a lingring and pining Death. If you will not believe me, look, *For Wrath killeth the fooliſh Man, and Envy ſlayeth the ſilly one.* And *Solomon in Prov.* 14. 30. *A ſound Heart is the Life of the Fleſh, but Envy the rottenneſs of the Bones:* Whereas it is ſaid of Charity. *Charity ſuffereth long; and is kind, Charity envieth not.* Now we have not more ſenſe of any thing, than that to live in Love and Good-will, is to live at Hearts-eaſe and Great-content. They that live in Univerſal Love, in Reconciliation with God and the whole Creation, they are offended at no Body but are Rejoyced at any Good that befals any Body whatſoever. Wherefore theſe Diſtempers Pride, Envy, and Malice, hurt the Body: And if Men hurt themſelves, upon this occaſion is God to be charged? No, it is themſelves.

Job. 5. 2.

1 Cor. 13. 4.

The *Second* ſort of Vices are Intemperance and Wantonneſs. Theſe bring our Bodies to filthy loathſome Diſeaſes, ſometimes even to rottenneſs while our Souls inform them. Now theſe Men diſhonour themſelves, make themſelves cheap, and expoſe themſelves to contempt, and ſcorn, and make their Bodies unfitting Tabernacles for their Souls; do Alienate their Bodies from their uſe; for the Body

is to be a Tool and Inſtrument to the Soul, in order to Virtue: Now theſe Men quite ſpoil their Bodies. I will tell you what one ſaith is the Conſequence upon that intemperance we call Drunkenneſs: Aking in the Head, Nauciouſneſs in the Stomach, Drought in the Throat, Languor in all the Parts, Folly, or Fury in the Mind, and laſtly, a Feaver in the whole. Now all theſe are avoided, where there is true Self-Government. Diſc. XXVIII.

Thirdly. Idleneſs, and Sloath. Theſe are alſo our Bodies Enemies: For thoſe Bodies, through Idleneſs and Sloath, come to putrifie, as Water in Ponds, by ſtagnancy. The ſecurity of every thing is by Motion. The Air we breath in, without Ventilation, it could not retain its purity; without Agitation and Motion, Water becomes noyſom: In like manner, by Idleneſs, Lazineſs and Sloath, our Bodies comes to be vitiated; for they are deprived of their great ſecurity, by not being put upon the all-preſerving inſenſible Tranſpiration. Now on the other ſide, Virtue, which is the Mind's due Complexion, this is Sovereign to our Bodies: the Wiſeman ſaith upon this account, *Prov.* 3. 16. *that length of Days are in the Right-Hand of Wiſdom.* I take by Wiſdom there, to be meant Reaſon and Religion; that that is founded in the Creation of God; Length of Days is ſecured by anſwering theſe Principles: All the genuine and kindly Operations of Virtue and Religion, are benign and favourable to our Bodies, and are their great Security. But in Deviation from theſe, there is the quite contrary Diſeaſes founded, and our very Bodies are ſpoiled.

Thus far have I given you account, that God is not to be charged with that, that we are the ſole cauſe of our ſelves. I have made it appear, that we bring upon our ſelves theſe three, which are the greateſt Evils that befal the Life of Man: We

Vol. III. bring them upon our ſelves, and we alone. Whoſoever therefore complains of his Mind, that he is Melancholy, becauſe of diſſatisfaction, he cannot approve himſelf to his own Reaſon. Whoſoever hath contracted Guilt, he himſelf is the Author of all this miſchief. Whoſoever hath contracted Naughtineſs of Mind, he himſelf hath brought it upon himſelf. And then our Bodies are corrupted, vitiated and ſpoiled, by three ſorts of Vices; Pride, Envy and Malice; Imtemperance and Wantonneſs; Idleneſs and Sloath.

I will now proceed thus. I will inſiſt upon two Grounds laid down by our Apoſtle. The *firſt* is in the 2d. Chapter of this Epiſtle, ver. 14th, 15th. That Man is a *Law to himſelf*: Where the Apoſtle aſſerts, that in the very State of God's Creation, a Man was made a Law to himſelf: And as God made Man, when he put him firſt out of his Hands, the work of the Law, the effect and purport was written in his Heart. The *Second* Ground is taken from the verſe preceding the Text; that every Sinner degenerates, and departs from the *Natural Uſe* of himſelf, his Powers and Faculties. And believe it, theſe two are Arguments that challenge conviction, Arguments beyond any poſſibility of reply; Man is left altogether ſpeechleſs without Anſwer or Apology.

Ἔργον τοῦ νόμου.

Firſt. That Man was made a *Law to himſelf*. Do but conſider what that imports; that Man was made Intelligent and Apprehenſive, that his very Principles are a Law to himſelf: And every Law hath an obliging Power. If a Man be a Law to himſelf, then he knows by the Right Uſe of his Faculties, what is his Duty, how he ought to behave himſelf to God, and how he ought to govern himſelf; and then he is neceſſarily ſelf-condemned if he tranſgreſs this Law, and if he lives in contradiction to it: And ſelf-condemnation is the very *Life of Hell*. There cannot be the worſt of Evil, where Self-

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condemnation is not: And if a Man be ſelf-condemned, it is not poſſible he ſhould be relieved by any thing that is foreign or external. *A Man a Law to himſelf.* This is certainly true in all neceſſary matters; For here a Man may know without any other Revelation: As that he is to live in all Fear, and Regard, and Apprehenſion of God; that he is to Govern himſelf according to Rules of Reaſon, Sobriety and Temperance; and deal with his Fellow-Creatures, according to Rules of Equity and Juſtice: So, that what the Apoſtle ſpeaks of the word of Faith, After-Revelation, I will here ſpeak alſo of the Truth that is knowable by Natural Light. *But the Righteouſneſs that is of Faith ſpeaketh on this Wiſe; ſay not in thy Heart who ſhall aſcend into Heaven, that is, to bring Chriſt down from above? Or who ſhall deſcend to the deep, that is, to bring up Chriſt again from the Dead? But what ſaith it? the word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart, and that is the word of Faith which we Preach.* This is true much more of the Principles of God's Creation. Let a Man look within himſelf, let him awaken and excite his Naturals: uſe employ, and improve his Faculties, he ſhall come to know what is Good, Juſt, Fit and Right. With the good God's aſſiſtance (who is univerſally to be acknowledged) we may come to ſee, know, underſtand and do. This I take for granted, that at leaſt a Man that is made to the perfection of Reaſon and Underſtanding, is as able to act to the heighth of Reaſon and Underſtanding, as any Senſitive or Vegitative in the World is able to act according to their Principles; and we obſerve, that all the lower Agents act according to their Nature, and fail not if they meet not with foreign diſturbance and impediment, which they cannot overcome. And can any one think that Reaſon and Underſtanding in Man is not as ſufficient and certain for its effects, as thoſe below. The Reaſon and Underſtanding of Man is certainly as

Diſc. XXVIII.

Rom. 10. 6, 7, 8.

Vol. III. ſufficient and proportionate to acts of Reaſon, as an Inferiour Nature is to acts Homogenial to it ſelf. And this will be Man's condemnation, varying from the Principles that God made him to conſiſt of. Man out of the way of Right and Reaſon, is a Monſter, a Prodigy; is in a State of Delinquency and Deformity; and doth not return to himſelf, but by Revocation of what is unduly done, and unleſs renewed by Repentance; and ſo miſerable: For nothing can be miſerable, otherwiſe than by being in an Unnatural eſtate. This is the firſt account I give you, that God when he made Man, made him to conſiſt of ſuch Principles, that he *was a Law given to himſelf*, and if he varied from this Law of his Creation, he muſt be ſelf-condemned, and is ſelf-condemned, unavoidably miſerable.

The *Second* is, That Men *leave, or change the natural Uſe*. Great Sinners leave the natural Uſe; therefore they are in a State of Violence: and nothing is happy in a violent State. The Propenſions and Inclinations of the Powers and Faculties of our Natures, are not controuled without great Violence offered to our ſelves, and a great Affront given to God. I inſtance in three things horribly Irreligious, and that are in contradiction to all you call Reaſon, Judgment and Underſtanding; and whoſoever is guilty of them, it is apparent he *leaves or changes the natural Uſe*.

Firſt. It is degenerate, horrid and monſtrous, as any thing poſſibly can be, for an Intelligent Agent, ſuch as Man is, to *live without God in the World*; for Mind and Underſtanding to be off from God: For it is natural for Mind and Underſtanding to move toward God. Mind and Underſtanding are God's peculiar Reſerve in Man; given to be employed about him. It is not more natural for light things to move upward, and heavy things downward, than for Mind and Underſtanding

derſtanding to move toward God. Now great Sinners are off from God, and live without God in the World; and therefore are in a State of Violence, in a State Unnatural. Diſc. XXVIII.

Secondly. It is Unnatural to be *Intemperate*: For all acknowledge that Nature is content with moderate things. Nature's Deſires are modeſt, and within bounds and compaſs. I dare ſay, no Man is guilty of Intemperance, but by a baſe Abuſe of himſelf; for all Exceſs is burthenſome: It is grievous to Nature, to exceed either in Eating or Drinking, either unmeaſurably, or unſeaſonably. Theſe Men alſo leave the *natural Uſe*.

Thirdly. It is Devilliſh to be Spiteful, or Envious, or Revengeful: Any one that is ſo, *leaves the natural Uſe*: For Man by Nature is a ſociable Creature, and therefore being ſociable in his Diſpoſition, he doth wiſh well to all thoſe in whoſe Company he takes pleaſure. Now this might be underſtood of Nature before it is abuſed by unnatural Acts, ill Cuſtom and Practice: But in its Degeneracy it is the quite contrary. For *Corruptio optimi eſt peſſima*, the better any thing is in its Conſtitution and Integrity, the worſe it is in its Depravation and Degeneracy. ξωὸν πολιτικὸν.

By theſe three I prove, that great Sinners are ill at eaſe in themſelves, and have offered Violence to their own Natures: And it is hereby apparent, that Miſery is of our ſelves; and that whoſoever periſheth, he will have cauſe to blame himſelf.

I now haſten to a *Concluſion*; and will ſhut up the Point with ſome *Inferences*. I infer Four Things.

Firſt. If the Creatures Miſery be within them, and from themſelves, then no Imputation is to be laid upon God, or hard uſage of any of his Creatures.

Secondly. If this were well considered, Men would not allow themselves to be Lawless, Arbitrary, Licentious, and Exorbitant: For this will be their ruin.

Thirdly. If this were also considered, then Men would not be aggrieved at the Shews and Appearances that are in this vain World.

Fourthly. This recommends to us the Principles of *Reason and Religion*; where all is sincere and solid; where nothing is imaginary, nothing conceited, nothing fantastical.

First. If the Creatures Misery be within, and from themselves, then no Imputation lies upon God, of hard Usage of any of his Creatures. This I dare affirm, that if any thing be to be suspected on God's part, it is one of these three Priviledges; and I will vindicate them all: Either, (1.) An Act of his absolute Sovereignty: Or, (2.) His irresistable Will: Or, (3.) His uncontroulable Power. And if I can Apologize for these three, then in no State the miserable Man can come into, will he be able to ease or relieve himself by charging any thing upon God. If any one think he may, I must tell him, that he runs a desperate hazard, and puts things upon a most vent'rous issue.

1*st.* No Creatures Misery proceeds from the *absolute Sovereignty of God*; because there is no danger at all to an Inferiour from the Superiour's Sovereignty, where the Superiour's Sovereignty is in certain conjunction with Righteousness and Holiness. For they do absolutely determine to the Reason of things, and always have respect to that. Where Righteousness and Holiness are in conjunction with Sovereignty, no danger; nothing formidable in Sovereignty, where Righteousness and Holiness are in conjunction with it; as they are certainly in God: Which Scripture affirms a thousand times over of the Divine Sovereignty, and assures us, that all the

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ways of God are ways of Truth, Righteouſneſs, and Holineſs: Therefore no danger. Yea, ſo far from being in danger, that I dare affirm, that it is our great advantage; becauſe he that is inveſted with Sovereignty, can every where make Supply as occaſion requires: Nothing at any time is wanting to a perfect determination of any cauſe; becauſe nothing is wantting in Power or Right. If now we have to do with God, becauſe of his abſolute Sovereignty, he hath power in himſelf to to do what is needful: And whatſoever he promiſes is infallible: For God, becauſe of his abſolute Sovereignty, is not accountable to any elſe; and it is a full Determination what he doth ſay or do; becauſe he hath an inherent and an independent Right. So that God's abſolute Sovereignty is our advantage. For whatſoever God ſaith and declares, we may be ſure of his Terms, becauſe he doth not act as one that is under reſtraint; but whatſoever he ſaith is right, and ſhall certinly take effect. We ſhall have things certainly and ſoon brought to a period: And no danger from it, becauſe of its certain conjunction with Holineſs and Righteouſneſs. And Holineſs and Righteouſneſs have reſpect to the Reaſon of the thing, and to be dealt withal according to the Reaſon of the thing, nothing in Heaven is better. Therefore the deſtruction of any Creature cannot be thought to be, in any wiſe, an Act of Sovereignty.

Diſc. XXVIII.

Nor, *Secondly*, is it the eſſect of God's irreſiſtable *Will*. We know this, becauſe God hath declared it: For though the Counſels both of God and Men are Secret while in their own Breaſts; yet no longer ſo when once declared. Now the Scripture doth declare (and that is God's Inſtrument in the World, that doth declare and abundantly ſhew us) That *God doth neither Will, nor take pleaſure in the Deſtruction of any of his Creatures.* Therefore nothing formidable in the irreſiſtable Will of God; neither

Prov. 1. 22, 23. Iſ. 5. 4. Ezek. 18. 32. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Phil. 2. 13.

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is there the leaſt reaſon to ſuſpect at all the Will of God, tho' granted irreſiſtable; either from any Quality of the Divine Nature, or from any Intereſt or any Inſtance we have of God's Proceedings and Dealing with his Creatures. *Firſt*, I refer to God's Inſtrument in the World; which if we be Chriſtians, we acknowledge, and by it are to be concluded, as being the voluntary Reſolutions of the Divine Will: And that aſſures us, that *God is Love*; *and whoſoever dwells in Love, dwells in God.* But then, if you lay aſide the Bible, and go to Reaſon, I ſay there is no Reaſon, no ground of Suſpicion, not from the firſt, if you conſider the Quality of the Divine *Nature*: For it is well reſolved concerning God, That all Ill-will is baniſhed from the Throne of God: Envy and Malice are not within the Throne of the Divine Majeſty: No ſuch thing as Envy and Malice in Heaven; theſe are originally from Hell, and the worſt Principle of Hell: Theſe are eternally baniſhed from the Divine Nature. Therefore no Quality in God gives us cauſe to ſuſpect.

1 Joh. 4. 16.

Φθόνος ἐκτὸς τοῦ θρόνου *Invidentia non eſt in cœlo.*

2*dly*. Neither any *Intereſt* on God's part. Who can imagine any *Intereſt* to God in the loſs of a Creature. No, God's *Intereſt* in his Creature is greater in any of us, than we have in our ſelves: And methinks thoſe that are Parents, they not finding in themſelves any deſire to the ruine of their Children, ſhould not think any ſuch thing in God. What doth God get by Hell? It is the Glory of God to maintain and propagate Holineſs, and Righteouſneſs, and Truth throughout the whole Creation: And this is God's doing all for his own Glory, and it is the Explication of our doing all for the Glory of God, to be ſubſervient to this Deſign; and in this way is Life and Happineſs, *Rom.* 2. 5. *To them who by a patient continuance in well doing, ſeek for Honour, and Glory, and Immortality,*

lity, and Eternal Life. By confining our ſelves in the uſe of our Power and Liberty, to Good only, we ſerve God and glorifie him. But, Diſc. XXVIII.

3dly. No ground of Suſpicion from the Proofs we have of God in his dealing with his Creatures. *Experience of God doth witneſs*, that God hath no deſign in the Miſery of the Creature. What is there in God, but a great Patience to bear with all the Indignities of the Profane, and all the Falſities of a Hypocritical Crew? *Solomon* tells us, *That Sentence againſt an Evil Work, is not ſpeedily executed.* And doth he not *make his Sun to riſe and to ſhine upon the Ungodly as well as upon the Righteous?* And is it not expreſly declared, That *his tender Mercies are over all his Works?* And the Goſpel puts it out of doubt: *God ſo loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting Life.* And what could he do more? *And him hath God exalted with his Right Hand, to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give Repentance to Iſrael, and forgiveneſs of Sins.* So that we have great cauſe to think otherwiſe of God, than that he is a deſigner of his Creatures Miſery: for in ſo thinking, we do God a ſecond Injury. The firſt is, we neglect God; the ſecond is, we charge him with our Fault, and with our Ruin; and that is worſe than the former. Now for the Eccl. 8. 11. Matt. 5. 45. Pſ. 145. 9. Joh. 3. 16. Act. 5. 31.

Third. No ſuſpicion from God's uncontroulable *Power.* It is true, Omnipotency might do what it would; but there is no cauſe to fear or ſuſpect the uncontroulable Power of God, to make a Creature miſerable. My Reaſon is, That Agent is without all ſuſpicion of uſing Power to the hurt of a Creature, that did voluntarily of his infinite Goodneſs, uſe his Power to call that Creature out of nothing into being. For it was a communication of Grace and Favour, to awaken one out of

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Vol. III. *Non-entity*, and bring him into being, when there was nothing to move either Agency or Compaſſion. How can we ſuſpect *that Power* to do us harm cauſeleſly; which Power, upon its own Diſpoſition, did call us into being? He who upon his own good Diſpoſition, in the firſt inſtance, did employ his Power to call out of nothing into being; he is not to be ſuſpected, but that he will regard the Deſire, the Eſtate, and the neceſſity of the Creature in the ſecond inſtance, that is to preſerve the Creature. No reaſon therefore to think that the Creature ſhall become wretched or miſerable, by any Act of his, by whoſe Benignity he was called into being. Let us therefore reſolve with Job 33. 6. *Elihu, I will aſcribe all Righteouſneſs to my Maker.* And let us do ſo too; and avoid all ſuch Thoughts and Apprehenſions concerning God, as will any ways diſcommend him to us, or diſcountenance our Applications and Approaches to him. Now to this let me add, that this is the firſt and leading point in all Religion, for every one to entertain right Suppoſitions concerning God: For whoſoever hath wrong Apprehenſions of God concerning his Creature, he ſtumbles at the Threſhold: For all Religion depends upon a Man's having in his Mind right Suppoſitions concerning God. And he that miſrepreſents God to himſelf, he will not love him: And he doth diſcourage and diſcountenance his own Application to him.

Ὀρθὰς ὑπολήψεις.

Thus I have made it appear, that ſince Man's Miſery is within himſelf, and of himſelf; we are not to attribute to God any hard Uſage of his Creature. I believe, could the damn'd in Hell find in God the leaſt Failure, they would be leſs ſelf-condemned, and ſo in a degree put out Hell-fire: For the Life of Hell is to be ſelf-condemned. And thus may the ſcrupulous and doubtful Mind of Man be ſatisfied, and freed from its fear of God's Abſo-

lute

lute *Sovereignty*, Irreſiſtable *Will*, or uncontroulable *Power*. But abſolutely to rid the Mind of Man from all Scruples, I muſt ſuperadd a

Diſc. XXVIII.

Fourth. Some may apprehend remedileſs Danger from that which we call God's *Juſtice*. I confeſs, if I cannot ſatisfie you in this Caſe, this will be beyond all the former. For if Juſtice require the Deſtruction of a Creature, this will put a neceſſity upon God himſelf; he can do no otherwiſe. If the neceſſity of Juſtice require ſo, he is not limited to deſtroy a Sinner to maintain his Righteouſneſs; and this is beyond the three former: For in caſe of the other three, he may uſe his Liberty as he pleaſeth; to wit, in the uſe of his Dominion, the determination of his Mind, and the executions of his Omnipotency; in theſe he may uſe his Power as he pleaſeth: But if Juſtice require it, he is neceſſitated, and can do no otherwiſe. I ſay two things to this. *Firſt*. God is upon no account neceſſitated to puniſh Sin, at leaſt, not to puniſh it finally, where he meets with After-repentance in the Sinner. I ſay, to the *Penitent*, I keep ſtrictly to that: For to forgive Sin to the Impenitent, I underſtand it not. *Secondly*. God is the Maſter of his own Satisfaction; he may admit of ſuch Recompence as he is pleaſed with, and as he judgeth fit, without being accountable to any elſe: for the Right of Puniſhment is the ſecondary Right in God. The firſt Right is the Right of Obedience: and if the Creature deny Obedience, God hath a Right to extort it. But now if any one think, that God cannot abate, remit, relaxate; then he denies to God common Right: For this is a common Right; every one that hath Right, may diſpoſe of it: Any Man may do this; and ſhall we deny this to God? Every one hath Power to retain, or part with what is his own Right if he will. *Secondly*. I add, that it doth plainly appear, that the neceſſity of Juſtice doth not ſo require,

Utens ſuo jure.

require, as this Suſpicion doth alledge; by Reaſon of the great Acquieſcence that God hath in the great Interpoſure of his Son, and the Sinners Repentance and Faith. Thus I think I have made it appear, that no Creature comes to Miſery, by any Act of God's; which was my firſt Inference.

But *Secondly*. If this were conſidered, Men would not allow themſelves to be Lawleſs, and Exorbitant, though they might avoid the Danger of Divine and Humane Laws: For Miſery ariſeth from within, ſo that Sinners will be miſerable, and unhappy, though God and Man ſhould let them alone; for Miſery ariſeth from within. Men do acts that are Monſtrous and Unnatural, and though God ſhould over-look them, and let them alone; yet theſe Sinners would be Miſerable and Unhappy, if any of theſe four things would make them ſo. Guilt of Conſcience, Malignity and Naughtineſs of Mind, a ſickly, diſeaſed and rotten Body, or God withdrawing in diſpleaſure: If any of theſe four would make a Man Miſerable, then a Sinner would be Miſerable, if God ſhould let him alone. *First*. *Guilt* of Conſcience. And this hath driven Men to the moſt cruel and unnatural Practices upon themſelves: For it hath put them upon deſpair, and hurried them by their own means; to avoid internal Hell, it hath driven them to external Hell, by their own Hands. We are not ſure of the Reaſon of our own Minds, for our own preſervation, (which is our greateſt ſecurity under God) when our Reaſon is not ſatisfied in our Religion, or when our Practices are not Juſtified by the Reaſon of our Minds. *Secondly*. *Malignity* and Naughtineſs of Mind. This *Second* hath made Men's Condition very tedious, and uneaſy to themſelves; as not having Power and Government of their Minds; ſo no true ſelf-enjoyment, that is upon ſuch Grounds as will bear examination, if Men come to Reflect and conſider.

Alſo

Also this *Malignity* and Naughtiness of Mind, hath made Men very Pests and Plagues to the Places where they live, and disturbers of the quiet of the Persons, who are their Neigbours, and in converse, with whom they have their Habitations. This internal Rancour and Naughtiness of Mind, as it dispossesseth Men of themselves, that they have no true self-enjoyment; so it makes them very ill Neighbours, Pests and Plagues to all those they live in conjunction withal: For it still puts them upon plotting, and contriving mischief, and makes them greedy of the first opportunity to put it in practice. *Thirdly.* A diseased and rotten Body: And as to this I have shewed you, that many Vices tend to the hurt of the Body; therefore a Body thus marred and spoiled, through Wickedness and Sin, this doth make work for the Physician, and puts us upon very uncouth Remedies, many of the Remedies are to Nature intollerable; and besides this, intemperate use doth take off and prevent the natural Pleasure of temperate Eating and Drinking, and Sleeping; for in Natures way only is Health and Strength. *Fourthly.* God with-drawing in displeasure. And this imports the Being cut off from the Fountain, taken out of the Centre, and being driven from the End: For such is God in relation to the Souls of Men. All things desire and move toward their Centre, and being driven from that, die: The Soul of Man rent from God, is as Leaves rent off from the Tree, which wither, and come to nothing. So far as our Minds are fixed in God, so far they retain their Perfection; but rend the Soul of Man from God, it shrivels up, and comes to nothing till it be restored to God, and rest in him as Origi-

Disc. XXVIII.

Anima avulsa a Deo tanquam folia que de arbore decidunt. Quam diu mens nostra, in Deo tanquam in radice defixa est, perfectiones & dotes, quibuscum a Deo creata est, integras retinet: Sin avellatur inde, aut abscedat, elangueſcit illico & emarcessit, donec iterum convertatur ad Deum, & illi adhæreſcat.

nal,

nal, and Final. For believe it, God is the Centre of all immortal Spirits and Subſtances; they eat not the Fleſh of Oxen, nor Drink the Blood of Goats. The loſs of the Sun to the World, is nothing to the loſs of God to reaſonable and immortal Souls. God is the immaterial Sun, in the immaterial World of Angels and Spirits. And ſo much for the *Second* Inferrence, a Word to the other Two

Thirdly. If this were well conſidered, Men would not be aggrieved at the ſhews and appearances of this vain World; ſo as to Envy the condition of the fond and fooliſh, who intoxicate themſelves with Fancies, and are Self-flatterers. For be it what it will, either Power, or Command, or Wealth; if it be not in conjunction with uprightneſs and integrity, it is but a vain ſhew; they have neither ſolidity nor ſubſtance, nor are of permanency, or continuance, becauſe they have not Truth at the bottom, their joy is a ſorry thing, it may be from the Teeth outward; but not having a ſolid Foundation, it is but a Lie. *The triumphing of the Wicked is ſhort, and the joy of the Hypocrite is but for a Moment.* This ſeeming Proſperity of the Wicked, hath been a ſtumbling Block to Good-Men in former Ages, as to *David*, *Pſal.* 73. to *Job*, chap. 21. 7. to *Jeremiah*, chap. 12. till they had bethought themſelves, and examined and conſidered: But that's well that ends well. It is no more ſincere and ſolid, than the ſatisfaction High-way-Men and Robbers have, in that they ſeem to get for the preſent, who tho' they Domineer for a while, and carry all before them, yet forget their Pleaſure, or remember it with Repentance, when 'tis too late; when they come to be arraigned, condemned, and executed. The Tempter Abuſes theſe credulous Perſons, ſuggeſting the Day of Vengeance to be a long time hence; whereas the Sins of Men do not always

Res ſevera eſt verum gaudium. Job. 20. 5.

ſtay

stay for all their Punishment, till the Day of Judg- Disc.
ment. But whether external Punishment be sooner XXVIII.
or later; Wickedness carries Misery in its own
Bowels. Were we by at times, to see the Tor- 1 Tim. 5.
ture and Anguish that Guiltiness doth give occa- 24.
sion to, the unquietness of naughty and malicious
Minds; the perplexities and vexations of the envi-
ous; a Man of Poverty; if of innocency and
integrity, would not change conditions with
them, notwithstanding all their Accommodations,
and gay Out-sides. *Wicked Men are like the troubled* Is. 57.20
Sea, when it cannot rest, whose Waters cast up Mire and
Dirt, and ver. 21 *There is no Peace, saith my God,*
to the Wicked.

Fourthly. This then doth effectually recommend to us the Principles of Reason and Religion, as things fit to Rule and Govern in the Life of Man: As things Sovereign to Nature, as the Law of Men's Apprehensions, and the Rule of Men's Actions. These moderate Men's Passions, compose Men's Spirits, quiet their Minds, keep Men in their Wits and secure their Bodies. A discomposed Mind doth disaffect the Body, and a distempered Body doth disturb the Mind. This is upon universal experience found true, that there is more of solid satisfaction in Good Self-government, than in all the forced Jollities and Pleasures in the World. The Irreligious, *leave the Natural Use*, which till Nature be put out of course, and by custom habituated to the contrary, cannot but be grievous. Things easily go on in Natures way; in their Natural course, and being interrupted, for awhile at least, strive to return to their Natural course again. Nothing doth well under Force and Violence, and they that force things, often, break themselves; but things return to their course. This hath been found true in cases of several sorts; *Res nolunt male administrari.* When the impediment is removed, things return to their Na-

tural course. If their be no Rancour, no Naughtiness in our Minds, to obey God's Commandments will be connatural to us, not grievous. The World hath an ill opinion of Religion; but if we will believe our Saviour, *his Yoke is easy, and his Burthen is light*; *Commandments are not grievous.* *David* found the highest content in them, *Ps.* 119. and *Solomon*: It is the Sum of all his Experience; he found all else to be Vanity but the true Motions of Religion.

Matt. 11. 30.
1 John 5. 3.

I *conclude* with this. If it sometimes comes to pass, through the Grace and Goodness of God, that some patticular Persons, after a wild course run; if incorrigibleness and invincible hardness be not contracted by unnatural Practices, upon self-reflection, and after consideration, come greatly to be-fool themselves and challenge, and condemn themselves in what they formerly had done; and return with firm resolution, and great courage to the ways of Sobriety and Religion, and hold better to it, because of former costly experience; such an Instance is a great condemnation of Licentious, and Exorbitant Practices; and is a Testimony from Persons of double experience, to the better ways of Virtue. And this we have had Experience of, that none prove better Men than these; and they make Recompence by their good Example, and Justifie the Truth which they did Transgress Arbitrarily and Licenciously before.

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXIX.

That those who are truly Religious will be delivered from all dangerous Errors about Religion.

* PHIL. 3. 15, 16.

* See Vol. II. Disc. VIII.

Let as many of us therefore as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you.

Nevertheless, whereto ye have already attained, let us walk by the same Rule, let us mind the same Things.

THE Substance of these Words may be gathered up in these four Propositions. Disc. XXIX.

I. There is *that* in Religion, which is necessary and determined; fixt and immutable, clear and perspicuous; about which Good Men, they who are of growth and proficiency in Religion, do not differ. *As many as are perfect are thus minded.*

II. There is also in Religion *that* which is not so necessary, and immutable, clear, and plain; in which Good-men may happen to be otherwise minded one than another; or otherwise than ought to be. *If any be otherwise minded.*

III. There is Reaſon to think that God will bring out of particular miſtake him that is right in the main. *God ſhall reveal even this unto you.*

IV. They who agree in the main, but differ in other particulars, ought nevertheleſs to hold together, as if they were in all things agreed. *To walk by the ſame Rule, to mind the ſame things.*

I. There is *that* in Religion which is neceſſary, and determined; fixt, and immutable; clear, and perſpicuous; about which Good-men, thoſe that are *Perfect*, i. e. Who are of growth and proficiency, or are ſincere and honeſt, do not differ. The great, momentous, and weighty things of Religion; are ſuch wherein there is univerſal conſent, and agreement. Good-Men do not differ in things that are, (1.) Perfectly agreable to the *Divine Nature*: Or, (2.) In things that are perfectly agreeable to *Humane Nature*. The (1.) great materials of Natural Light: And (2.) the great Articles of Chriſtian Faith.

II. There is alſo in Religion *that* which is not ſo neceſſary and immutable; ſo clear and plain; in which Good-men may happen to be otherwiſe minded, one than another; or otherwiſe than ought to be. *If any be otherwiſe minded.*

Here we may note.

Firſt, The *Cauſes* and *Occaſions* of Error and Miſtake in theſe things.

Secondly, The *Preſervatives*, and *Security*, againſt the danger of it.

Firſt, The *Cauſes* and *Occaſions* of Error and Miſtake, are theſe.

1. The Creatures *Fallibility*.

2. Accidental *Prejudices* from Education; Converſe: Common Senſe: Strong Imagination: Melancholick

lancholick Temper: Weakneſs of Parts, and (which is of greater Deformity than all the former) Affectation, Singularity, worldly Intereſt. *Of theſe I have already ſpoken.* Diſc. XXIX.

3. The *Darkneſs of things* themſelves: As where there is leſs of Reaſon to be ſaid for a thing; or where the Rule of Faith is ſhort: As to *that* I take the Rule to be. So far as God hath not determined, we are referred to Reaſon, and to the ſenſe of our Nature. For God did not make one uncapable Creature, when he made one that was Intelligent. Reaſon is the firſt Participation from God.

Now, as to *certain Reſolution*, where there is neither Conviction in the way of Reaſon; nor aſſurance from Revealed Truth; in this Caſe, our courſe (after diligent Search) will be, ſtay and expectance, rather than any peremptory Concluſion in the point. 'Tis ſafer to ſuſpend determination, ungroundedly reſolved. *Difficile eſt deponere Errorem.* 'Tis hard to get rid of an Error, therefore take heed of admitting one.

In this caſe the knowledge of the thing is of leſs importance: And the Ignorance of it, is of leſs danger. An implicit Faith in God, without particular knowledge is ſafe in this caſe: And nothing is gained by Temerity, raſhneſs, and ſuddeneſs of Opinion. He that *is light of Faith, by the ſame Reaſon, will be light of Unbelief*; he will as eaſily diſbelieve Truth, as believe Error. So that he does whatſoever he does by accident, and chance; he doth nothing by a certain Rule, ſo that another may know what he will do next. I do not ſuppoſe Uncertainty in Neceſſaries of Faith, or Life and Practice; but that is Darkneſs in other Things.

4*ly*. *Nor Improvement* of Intellectuals is another Cauſe of Error. *Men are nothing, where they have*

Vol. III. *not thought.* Men are as they have uſed themſelves: *Sui cuique mores fingunt Fortunam.* A Man's Temper and Improvement make him *that* which he is. We work out of our ſelves. Knowledge is fetcht out of us, not brought into us. *Scientia educitur, non inducitur.* The Underſtanding is not in habit before it is in Act. *Intellectus non eſt in habitu, ante actum.*

There are Common Principles, Κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι, which every one who conſiders may come to the knowledge of: but before Study and Thought, the Mind *is Abraſa Tabula*; as white Paper, that has nothing written upon it. The Principles of Reaſon, are as the Term of a Reaſonable Soul: And thoſe Principles, are Principles of Action: So the Philoſopher. *Anima eſt in diſpoſitione ad quamlibet Formam, in poteſtate ad omnem Actum.* The Soul may be made any thing; and may do any Action.

'Tis neceſſary the Mind of Man ſhould be enlightned, as to *matters of Faith*; and excited as to other things within its Sphere, within the compaſs of *Reaſon.*

A Man may be for a while in a falſe Opinion, thus; upon preſumption, and imagination fortified by non-attendance, and a non-occurrence of an *occaſion* of thorough examination as yet; which when once given, the Error is diſcarded. A Man may chance, by ſome Incogitancy, to be in an Opinion, which when he comes ſeverely to examine and Cenſure; he may wonder at his former inclination.

The materials of knowledge are large, and very various: Many are greatly incumbred with buſineſs, and have little leiſure: And we are not conſiderable, where we have not Thought, and Examined. None is ſelf-ſufficient, or born to actual knowledge; but to Faculties and Poſſibilities only: We are much more our ſelves where we have taken Pains and made Enquiry.

5. An-

5. Another cauſe of Error, is want of neceſſary *Helps* and Supplies which others do enjoy; as Friends, fitting Acquaintance, freedom of Converſe, liberty of time, and opportunity. It betters Mens Health and Conſtitution to Live and Breath in a free and open Air. Had ſome but once heard a Suppoſition, or Suggeſtion to the contrary, they had eſcaped their miſtakes. Poſſibly, if they had once imagined, that others had not ſo thought, they would have conſidered; ſo ſenſible is Modeſty and Ingenuity. Diſc. XXIX.

Men acted by God's Spirit, imitate the Divine Spirit; and come as Refiners with Fire, to do away Man's Droſs. One who hath well conſider'd, conſulted, examined, is Oraculor to the Ignorant, to Perſons of no Vacancy and leiſure. Theſe have prepared intellectual Dainties, Spiritual Food for them.

How comparatively defective in reſpect of others, ſuch an one is, who lives out of free and ingenuous Converſe, though of commendable Self-improvement? This Notion is ſo true, that I wonder any will venture to ſpeak, where he hath not thought, eſpecially in ſearching Company.

Theſe are the *Cauſes* and *Occaſions* of Errour and Miſtake.

Secondly. The *Preſervative* and *Security* againſt the danger of Errour, are,

1. Care of right *Information*. We owe this to our ſelves, as of nearer concernment than Food and Raiment. We owe this, as to Truth, in reſpect of its Worth and Excellency; ſo to our own Souls. Truth is of kin to our Souls, and natural to us: Errour is foreign, and a Lye. No Truth is ſo uſeleſs and unprofitable, as by any Principle we may admit, to be neglected. 'Tis the beſt Apology for a Miſtake, that we did look out after Truth.

2. Let the Temper of Mind be *modeſt* and *humble*. Secure the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit. *The Meek God will lead in Judgment*, *Pſal.* 25. 9. and, *He gives Grace to the Lowly*, *Prov.* 3. 34. Every one is encouraged to diſcover his Senſe to the Candid and Ingenuous. This is the Learner's Temper. 'Tis every one's Duty to give Anſwer to every ſuch Enquirer. To be ready always to give Anſwer to every Man that asketh a Reaſon of the Hope that is in them, with Meekneſs and Fear, 1 *Pet.* 3. 18. But he is not likely to learn, who is not of a teachable Spirit.

3. A general *Intention* to entertain and ſubmit to all Truth, whatſoever whenſoever it ſhall appear: An implicit Faith in God, where the Senſe of any Text is not clear. This carries with it a double advantage; it doth qualifie, prepare, and diſpoſe the Mind to be receptive of the higheſt Truth whenſoever it ſhall appear: And it is an Antidote againſt the Malignity of any Errour, which, in the mean while, any one may chance to be in. He is in an honeſt meaning, whilſt in Errour (*in materia Erroris.*)

4. Deal *ingenuouſly with Truth*, and love it for it ſelf; both in reſpect of the Ground upon which you receive it, and of the Uſe you make of it. The Certainty and Aſſurance we have that it is Truth, we receive from Reaſon and Scripture; that it may be out of Conſcience to God, not out of Compliance with Humour and Luſt, nor out of a reſpect to a Party or Faction. To *compromiſe*, and refer our ſelves, is only excuſable for a while, as we are yet weak, and in the State of Learners.

Make not Truth ſubſervient to baſe Ends. Have Religion only to Honour God with, to do good to Men, to ſanctifie and ſave thy own Soul.

5. See the fatal iſſue of *Wilfulneſs* or *Wantonneſs* of Opinion, in the ſhameful Miſcarriages of ſuch as have

have given themſelves up to Dreams and Fancies. Hereof ſeveral Hiſtories give an account. Otherwhere we love to hear of Dangers, that we may provide againſt them, and avoid them. As good Examples are for our Imitation; ſo the bad are for our Admonition and Warning. If we be not careful of good Security of Truth, we give Advantage to the Devil to put his Deluſions upon us. We ſhall be obnoxious to all the Cheats and Impoſtors of all Counterfeits among Men.

Thoſe at *Munſter* in *Germany*, much about the time of the Reformation, proved a Scandal to the Reaſon of the World, and a Reproach to Chriſtianity. So are all thoſe who make Religion reproveable by ſober Reaſon; or turn the Grace of God into Wantonneſs. The *Gnoſticks* of old, and their Succeſſors in Spirit ever ſince, did this. There is nothing of After-light of God in Chriſt reconciling, ſubject to reproof of the Former-light of God creating.

The *Uſes* to be made of this are,

1. Let us live in the ſenſe of our *Fallibility*, being ſubject to Error, liable to Miſtake. 'Tis ſafe to know where we are weak; the ſenſe of it will make us Lowly, Temperate, Cautious. Why ſhould not ſenſe of being ſubject to Errour, make us careful to eſtabliſh a right Throne of Judgment in our Souls for ſecurity againſt Miſtakes; as well as ſenſe of Weakneſs makes us watchful againſt Miſcarriages in practice? Is a laſting Spot, that blemiſhes the Soul's Excellency, the apprehenſive part of the Mind leſs than a tranſient Act, a ſingle Irregularity in Practice, and Failure in Converſation? Is a crooked Principle leſs than a Step awry? Eſpecially ſince the Underſtanding is the Leading part of our Souls, and all that follows is according to the Dictates of Mind and Underſtanding? And a good meaning may do harm, if grounded on

Igno-

Ignorance and Miſtake, and not directed by Judgment and Diſcretion; as occaſioning a falſe Zeal, *Rom.* 10. 2. *A Zeal of God, but not according to Knowledge.*

2. Although Error be no where to be countenanced, yet it is not every where ſeverely to be *challenged*. Particular Errours and Miſapprehenſions in ſome things, is an Incidency to Uprightneſs of Heart, to honeſt Meaning. Yet the pure in Heart have this Advantage, from the Principles of Purity in them, that either their Errour is not grievous, or they will not long continue in it: For they have within them a Principle of Self-rectification and Refinement.

'Tis a Due from every Chriſtian to another, where miſtaken, as well as overtaken in a Fault, to be reſtored in the Spirit of Meekneſs, *Gal.* 6. 1. What our Saviour ſaid of the Woman, *John* 8. 7. may be rather ſaid in this Caſe; He that is aſſured that he errs in nothing, let him ſit in the Chair and paſs the Condemnatory Sentence. *Act.* 3. 17. The Apoſtle ſays, *I wot not through Ignorance ye did it*: It could not be abſolute Ignorance; but he makes the beſt of it. How could they be ignorant concerning One who did ſo much good, whether he were an innocent Perſon? 'Twas ignorant Zeal, miſtaken Knowledge at leaſt.

Γπράσκω διεὶ πολλα διδασκόμεν Θ. *Quotidie depono aliquem errorem.*

3. Even he that is in a *good Eſtate* has ſtill Work to do: To free his Underſtanding from Ignorance and Errour: To advance Knowledge to a juſt Height: Then to conform his Life and Practice to his Rule and Principle. We have not done our Task, nor the Work we have to do in the World, till we are well-informed in point of Judgment concerning Right and Wrong, True and Falſe, Good and Evil: Till we are ſuitably refined in Spirit, to reliſh and taſte; and reformed in Life, to do and practice. When this is done, then let a Man

Man think of dying; but before he is made ripe for Eternity, he is not naturalized in Spirit and Temper to the Employment and Society of that Heavenly State. Disc. XXIX.

4. The Senſe hereof ſhould make us *modeſt* and humble; preſerve us from being Peremptory and Dogmatical: For there is in Religion *that* which is not ſo neceſſary and immutable, clear and plain; in which *Good* Men may happen to be otherwiſe-minded, one than another; or otherwiſe than ought to be. *If any be otherwiſe-minded.*

III. There is Reaſon to think, that God will bring out of particular Miſtake, him that is right in the main. *God ſhall reveal even this unto him.*

There is *otherwiſe minded* one than another: That wherein they differ one from another; wherein one thinks otherwiſe than others think; perhaps thinks otherwiſe than he ſhould, or otherwiſe than is true. But where Men are honeſt in the main; ſincere and upright in the great points of Faith, as is before expreſſed; and as *Hebr.* 6. 9. *We are perſuaded better things of you, and things that accompany Salvation.* Where 'tis thus, *God ſhall reveal.*

1. This is ſpoke reaſonably, worthily, *becomingly* in reſpect of *God*. Not as true only in a miraculous and extraordinary way; but as 'tis fit for us to think and ſpeak concerning God.

2. This is ſpoken *Hopefully*, and charitably in reſpect of *Men*. Good Men do not love an Error, and therefore are not likely to Live and Dye in it.

This is ſpoken *becomingly* with reſpect to *God*, and *charitably* with reſpect to *Men*: For I do not look upon the words as Prophetical, or extraordinary. The thing it ſelf is likely and credible.

firſt, In reſpect of ſomething on God's Part.

Secondly,

Secondly, In reſpect of ſomething on *our* Part: And,

Thirdly, In reſpect of ſomething on the Part of *Truth*.

First, This is a thing likely and credible in reſpect of ſomething on *God's Part*: And that for three Reaſons.

1. Becauſe of *God's Relation to us*; his Diſpoſition towards us as his Creatures and Worſhippers. God is the *Father of our Spirits*, and ſo it is natural to him to guide our Spirits: *He teacheth Man Knowledge*: *The Inſpiration of the Almighty giveth Underſtanding*. The Eyes of all things look up unto God for bodily Food: Mind and Underſtanding look up to God for Intellectual Communications. God hath not the leaſt care of that part of his Creation which doth moſt reſemble him. God hath appointed the material Sun to enlighten the World of Senſatives, and *there is nothing hid from the heat thereof*, *Pſal.* 19. 1---6. God intended by himſelf, to enlighten reaſonable Souls. The Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord. As we are the *Creatures* of God, we are ſure of this: And as we are *Worſhippers* of God, we ſhall be directed and aſſiſted by him.

2. Becauſe God hath ſo *declared* and *Promiſed*. *The Meek will be lead in Judgment*; *the Meek will he teach his way*, Pſal. 25. 9. *He ſcorneth the Scorners*, *but giveth Grace to the lowly*, Prov. 3. 23. *He reſiſteth the Proud*, *and giveth Grace to the Humble*, Jam. 4. 6. and 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. *If any Man will do his Will*, *he ſhall know of the Doctrine*. John 17. 17. *He will guide into all Truth*, John 16. 13. The Diſciples of Chriſt were his ſpecial Inſtruments to ſpread the Goſpel, by immediate Inſpiration: The ſucceſſive Generations have it by their Writings.

3. Becauſe God *begins* with us, with Intention to go on, if we be not perverſe and wilful: If we give him

him not Offence; if a Provocation to him do not, *Ponere obicem*, put a Bar: As the Murmuring of the *Israelites* in the Wilderneſs, and their Unbelief, obſtructed and delayed their entrance into the promiſed Land. 'Tis the Account why *Moſes* himſelf might only ſee *Canaan*, might not enter into it, *Numb.* 20. 12. 'Tis ſaid of our Saviour, that *he could do no Miracles there becauſe of their Unbelief*, Matt. 13. 58. And, *that he had many things to ſay, but they could not bear them then*, *John* 16. 12. Diſc. XXIX.

Now in the caſe ſuppoſed in the Text, God had *begun*, yea he had done greater things: They were minded and reſolved to *preſs towards the mark* &c. The true effect of God's Grace: And the ſame Goodneſs which moved God to begin, will further engage him. God is not wanting in neceſſaries; neither as to the beginning, nor as to the Progreſs in Goodneſs, neither to the Beginning, nor increaſe, nor perfecting of our Faith, *Phil.* 3. 13. 'Tis therefore, for theſe Reaſons, likely and credible, that God will *Reveal* it to them, if any be *otherwiſe minded*.

Nec adortum nec ad progreſſum bonæ voluntatis.

Secondly, This is likely and credible, in reſpect of ſomething on *our* Part. By Truth *already* received, we have a double advantage for receiving more.

1. The way to the Underſtanding, which was Obſtructed, is *opened*, and,

2. The Mind is brought into a Diſpoſition and *Preparation* to receive all Divine Truth. The Miſts and Fogs of Natural Ignorance are diſpelled: the Faculty is initiated to its proper Employment: the greateſt difficulty is over, which is at the Beginning. We are made readily Receptive of *any Truth*, being ſanctified thereto, by Truth already entertained. We hold the Truth virtually, implicitly in the Preparation of our Minds, which we do not actually know when we are thus reſolved, ready

πεπαγμένοι εἰς ξυνὴν αἰωνίον.

Vol. III. dy to receive, whatſoever God ſhall *further* or *otherwiſe* ſhew; or whereinſoever we may be hereafter informed.

He that is *thus* only in an Error, that he is not in love with any Opinion, but upon ſuppoſition that it is Truth; as he is not in danger while he is in a miſtake, ſo whenſoever he is ſhewn, he preſently rectifies his Apprehenſions, and thanks the Diſcoverer. 'Tis always an ill ſign, when the Teller of Truth hath an ill return for his Good-will. *Am I become your Enemy becauſe I tell you the Truth? Gal.* 4. 16. But in the foreſaid caſe there is implicit Faith in God, which is, in ſome degree, Knowledge of the thing. In this ſenſe, our Saviour ſaith, *Abraham rejoyced to ſee my day, and ſaw it, John* 8. 56. (*Hebr.* 11. 13.) *ſaw them afar off*, v. 40. *God having provided ſome better things for us, that they without us ſhould not be made perfect.*

Thus in reſpect to ſomething on *our* Part, 'tis likely and credible, that God *will Reveal* Truth unto thoſe who are *otherwiſe minded.*

Thirdly, This is likely, and credible in reſpect to ſomething on the Part of *Truth*: And that,

1. Becauſe Truth is *Connatural* to our Souls. The *Common motions* of our Minds and *Truth*, are not at any odds at all. The Mind makes no more reſiſtance to Truth, than the Air does to Light: Both are thereby Beautified and Adorned. This is to be underſtood, *while* the Mind retains its Primitive Temper and Conſtitution: And *after*, when it hath recovered it by Moral Purgation and Virtue; but Fondneſs and Partiality limits the Generouſneſs of Heaven-born Souls.

2. Becauſe the ſeveral Truths hang together, *mutually depend* each on other: One Truth helps on the diſcovery of another; and each Truth is declaratory and convictive of the ſame Error. For Inſtance,

Veritas eſt Index ſui, & obliqui.

If

If God be a *Spiritual* Subſtance, then his Worſhip chiefly muſt be Mental and Intellectual. If God be *Holy*, *Holineſs becomes his Houſe*, *Pſ.* 93. 4. and *we muſt ſerve him in Holineſs and Righteouſneſs* (*Luk.* 1. 75.) *before him all our Days.* If he be the firſt and chiefeſt *Goodneſs*, then he will graciouſly *conſider our Frame*, *and remember we are but Duſt*. *Pſ.* 103. 14. If *the Spirit of Man be the Candle of the Lord*, *Prov.* 20. 27. the Mind and Underſtanding ought to be employed about God. If God be the *Governour* of the World, then are we to be of good Carriage and Behaviour in his Family: Not to fall a beating our Fellow-Servants. If God be the *firſt Cauſe*, and the *laſt End*, then are we to acknowledge him, and finally to refer to him.

Diſc. XXIX.

Si Deus eſt animus pura mente colendus.

If *Man* be ζῶον πολιτικόν, made for converſe, then *we are to do as we would be done by*: We are to do Righteous things, and to live in love.

If we conſiſt of reaſonable *Souls* as well as *Bodies* of Earth; then are we to make a ſober and moderate uſe of bodily Conveniences, that our Minds be not Annoyed and diſturbed.

Thus it is likely and probable in reſpect of ſomething on the part of *Truth*, that God will reveal wherein Men are *otherwiſe minded*. If in *any* thing, if in any *other* thing, where ye hold to the main; to *preſs towards the mark*; be right in Principles, ſerious in practice and endeavours; and be otherwiſe minded one than another; even *this*, wherein ye think differently; to him that knows not, or miſtakes; God ſhall reveal.

Sic ex uno conceſſo ſequuntur mille.

Here I obſerve:

1. That *this* is more for the certain guidance of any honeſt Man, than He can in Scripture ſhew for Infallibility; who abroad uſurps the Title of the Head of the Church.

2. That we have warrant enough to think and ſpeak of God, things *worthy of him*: And tending

to

to our encouragment in good Behaviour. For I look at this [*God ſhall reveal*] as rationally ſpoken; *becomingly* in reſpect of *God*, *charitably* in reſpect of *Men*. There is no need of the gift of Propheſy to declare ſuch a Futurity: 'Tis but the right uſe of Reaſon, and the true improvement of Scripture. I ſhould not doubt to aſſure Men that God will not be wanting to them, while they keep in his ways.

I have given Grounds of good perſuaſion and confidence, that *God will reveal*, as the Apoſtle here ſaith; But leaſt I ſhould give any advantage to *Enthuſiaſm*, the Confounder of all Reaſon and Religion, I will further inſiſt upon explication, caution, and limitation: To which purpoſe I ſhall ſuperadd four things, and the

1. is, To keep within the *Compaſs of the Caſe*. Where Men are honeſt in their Way, do practice Truth, and not practice upon Truth, as Pretenders, Deſigners, ſuch as have By-ends, and ſiniſter Reſpects; where Men keep good Conſciences, are in no matter Immoral; not ſluggiſh, inactive, but diligent in the uſe of proper Means. Thus *this* of God's Revealing, ſuppoſes we keep within the Compaſs of the Caſe. We muſt not exceed the Bounds of the Grant: We muſt not make Conditionals abſolute. 'Tis true, that a Conditional Propoſition, if the Condition be performed, becomes abſolute; but not elſe. And although we have not a Condition in this Verſe, yet we have one in the Context. None are here concerned but thoſe who *preſs towards the Mark of the Prize*. Confinements and Enlargements are according to the Latitude of the Scripture. Our Saviour gives us to underſtand the Scripture: *He will give his Angels charge*, *Luk.* 4. 11. not of the Preſumptuous, *ver.* 12. *Thou ſhalt not tempt the Lord thy God*. *I will not fail thee*, is a Particular, *Joſ.* 1. 5. which is made a General, *Heb.* 13. 5.

Heb. 13. 18.

The

The *Bleſſing of God maketh rich*; and the *diligent Hand maketh rich*, *Prov.* 10. 4, and 22. God promiſes to *make us new Hearts*; and we alſo are bid to do the ſame. *Ezek.* 36. 26. *Jer.* 4. 4. God *works in us to will and to do*; who alſo bids us *work out our Salvation*, *Phil.* 2. 12, 13. God's Superintendency doth neither diſcharge, nor diſpenſe with our Subſerviency. Faith and Repentance on our part are always to be underſtood, in the Terms of the New Covenant. They put Men upon running a deſperate hazard, who tell them of abſolute Promiſes in this Senſe, as Men incluſive of due Qualification on our part: as not ſuppoſing our due Diligence, careful Uſe of Means, conſent of our Minds. That place, 1 *John* 2. 27. the *Anointing teaching all things*, and there is *no need that any teach*; is what ſome uſe to diſcharge Education, Means of Knowledge, God's Inſtruments. I am apt to ſuppoſe by it is meant, the Unction of thoſe times by the Holy Spirit; which was *extraordinary*: All Believers had it, againſt Seducers, as *v.* 26. The then Farmers of the Chriſtian Church, the Pen-men of the Scriptures had it; and we are taught by their Writings.

Diſc. XXIX.

Act. 3. 19. & 5. 31. Mar. 1. 15.

2. I conceive it antecedent, and neceſſary to the Teaching of God, that we *put off Pride*. Preſumption, Imagination, and Conceitedneſs, wholly indiſpoſe Men for Learning: There is more *hopes of a Fool, than of ſuch*. Theſe are full, vainly fraught and poſſeſſed: And the full Soul loaths the Honey-Comb. As to this caſe it is ſo full as not to admit any thing, though it be filled with Wind. One that is Wiſe in his own Eyes, is readier to impoſe than to receive. Alſo, who will trouble himſelf with him? And ſo he is not like to have any thing offered to his conſideration. *God reſiſts the Proud, but gives Grace to the humble: The meek will he guide in Judgment; and Teach his Way. Pſ.* 25. 9. *And*

Multo citius attigiſſent, ſi non putaſſent ſi jam jam non attigiſſe.

not that I have already attained. Wherefore be not wise in your own Eyes. Pro. 3. 7.

3. This doth *not* necessarily import immediate *Inspiration. God will reveal*; one way or other, in the Course of his Providence: Some Instrument of God, some lover of Truth shall tell him what he is to do; as was the case of the *Eunuch*, *Act.* 8. 35. He shall find it out, by some search of Scriptures; he shall meet with it comparing places: He shall hear of it in some good Company: in the use of ordinary Means. As it is true that God feeds us, and cloaths us, though he does not send *Manna* from Heaven, nor Quails, as the *Israelites* had in the Wilderness; nor does not make Coats for us, as he did for *Adam* and *Eve*, *Gen.* 3. 21. So in this case, it is not necessary there should be בַּת קֹל a *Voice from Heaven*, as there was three times in our Saviours Life; at his Baptism, Transfiguration, and a litttle before his Death. God will teach so far as is necessary to ingenerate Piety in us here, and to bring us to safety hereafter.

4. Where Knowledge is pursued by *Practice*, there is other expectation than from Speculation alone. *He that doth the will of God, shall know of his Doctrine*, *Joh.* 7. 17. The *Holy Ghost is given to those that Obey him*, *Act.* 5. 32. For none can reasonably claim the Promise of God or Man, who doth not come up fully to the Terms of him who made such promise. Now Religion, though it begins at Knowledge, it proceeds to Temper, and ends in Practice. Wherefore the Engagements God enters into, to the Religious; do not oblige, in case Persons be not, *in ultimo actu*; such to whom those engagements refer. *He is a lyer who saith he knows God, and keeps not his Commandments.* After *Davids* gross miscarriage, there is always a reserve *except in the case of Uriah.* 'Tis a blot in his Scutcheon, notwithstanding all the Promises made to him

him; witneſs his Childs death, *Ammon*, *Abſalom*, *Shimei*, *Sheba*, *Adonijah*.

Theſe *Cautions and Limitations* to prevent *Enthuſiaſm*: For nothing is more neceſſary for the Intereſt of Religion than to ſecure the Minds of Menagainſt *Enthuſiaſm*: For through unſkilfulneſs of Men; many have been ſubject to acknowledge more of ſupernatural aſſiſtance in hot unſettled Fancies, and in perplexed Melancholly; than in the calm and diſtinct uſe of Reaſon.

The *Inferences* I make from hence are,

1. The *purity of a Man's Mind*, the *ſincerity* of his Intention, the *honeſty* of his Heart is his great *Security*, gives mighty advantage to right Underſtanding, Orthodox Judgment. Of Holy things, Men of Holy Hearts and Lives, ſpeak with great aſſurance of Truth. There is not only the Ability of theſe Mens parts (as others have;) but there is the Naturalneſs of the ſubject to their State and Temper, eſpecially of the acquaintance they have with it, and the experience they have of it: And God's Bleſſing over and above.

There is a double advantage from the Grace of Heart and the Gooodneſs of the Spirit; for it reſtores Health and Soundneſs, after a Declination and Tendency to Diſcompoſure and Diſtemper: 'tis of a different Nature from Falſhood and Lyes; and ſo hath the force of a contrary Inclination and Biaſs. In point *of Miſapprehenſion* and failure of Judgment, it is a principal Light for detecting and diſcovering: In caſe of *Miſcarriage* in Practice, it is ſanative and reſtaurative.

2. That in ways of Uprightneſs and Integrity we may Preſume of *God's leading us into all Truth*, we are concerned to know. God ſuffers it not to be vainly ſpoken in his Name, [*God ſhall reveal unto you.*] 'Tis Congruous and Seemly, that the ſenſe of God ſhould walk in all ways of Truth. This is in

purſuance of the former great work of Regeneration and Converſion: 'Tis a thing which belongs unto them, in reſpect of their State: 'tis what God is ready to do for them, at their entreaty. Therefore depend upon God, ſeek to him for it, acknowledge him in it, and wholly; lean not to thine own Underſtanding. 'Tis true that the Bleſſing of God in every way makes rich, gives Iſſue, makes ſucceſsful; but remarkable in this work of Illuminating Minds and Underſtandings.

3. Give a fair allowance of *Patience* to thoſe who mean well; be ready to ſhew to them, ſince there is ground of Expectation, that in a little time they will come out of their Error. Otherwhere Perſons of good Nature, Parents and Friends wait and expect while there is any Hope. *Nothing is deſperate in the Condition of Good Men*: They will not live and dye in any dangerous Error. They have a right Principle within them, and God's Superintendency, Conduct and Guidance. The Devil is thrown out of his ſtrong hold where there is Holineſs of Heart: And being diſpoſſeſſed of his main Fort, he will loſe all his Holds, one after another: All Errors and Miſtakes will be diſcovered ſucceſſively. The Sun having broken through the thickeſt Cloud, will after that ſcatter the leſs; and the Day will clear up. There is Reaſon to think God will bring out of particular miſtake, him that is right in the main. *God ſhall reveal even this unto him.*

DIS-

DISCOURSE XXX.

That the Unity of the Church is carefully maintained by all thoſe who are ſincere Chriſtians.

PHIL. 3. 15, 16.

Let as many of us therefore as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in any thing ye be otherwiſe minded, God ſhall reveal even this unto you.

Nevertheleſs, whereto ye have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule, let us mind the ſame Things.

THE Subſtance of theſe Words may be gathered up in theſe four Propoſitions. Diſc. XXIX.

I. There is *that* in Religion, which is neceſſary and determined; fixt and immutable, clear and perſpicuous; about which Good Men, they who are of growth and proficiency in Religion, do not differ. *As many as are perfect are thus minded.*

II. There is alſo in Religion *that* which is not ſo neceſſary, and immutable, clear, and plain; in which Good-men may happen to be otherwiſe minded one than another; or otherwiſe than ought to be. *If any be otherwiſe minded.*

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III. There is Reaſon to think that God will bring out of particular miſtake him that is right in the main. *God ſhall reveal even this unto you.*

IV. They who agree in the main, but differ in other particulars, ought nevertheleſs to hold together, as if they were in all things agreed. *To walk by the ſame Rule, to mind the ſame things.*

I am come to the laſt of theſe Propoſitions.

Nevertheleſs, though God hath not cleared up all things to ſeveral Underſtandings; though in all things concerning Religion, we are not agreed, as underſtanding alike. God hath not yet declared in particular, the Truth of that wherein we differ, which in time it may be hoped he will: *Nevertheleſs whereunto ye have already attained;*] as being come to a State of Religion; as having made ſome Progreſs and Proficiency; being arrived towards Perfection: *Walk by the ſame Rule*] of Faith and good Life, wherein they who are ſincere and honeſt underſtand themſelves alike; which is in it ſelf certain and determinate: Things of Reaſon and Scripture, given out by the Spirit, and atteſted by the Spirit. *Mind the ſame things.*] Live according to the Rule of Faith and Holineſs; in hearty Love and Good-will. *Be like-minded, having the ſame Love, being of one accord, of one mind, Phil.* 2. 2. There is Harmony, Concord, and Agreement; notwithſtanding difference in ſome Apprehenſions, in all degrees of Perfection.

Quicquid boni Conſequuti ſumus.

Secundum Judicium mentis in ſtudio Charitatis & benevolentiæ.

1. This is a Repreſentation of the *Heavenly State*, a true Reſemblance of it: It ſpeaks the Motion of the Lower World, proportionable to the Motion of the higher World: The two States Symmetral, of like meaſures; Concentrical, meeting in one point. 'Tis his *New Jeruſalem come down from Heaven:* Devout Souls aſcending in a Cloud, upon a Call

Call from Heaven. *Rev.* 11. 12. *Come up hither.* For they are come into one Spirit; are become as one and the ſame Inhabitants; all Enmity ſubdued and vanquiſhed, 1 *Cor.* 15. 25. In Heaven it is *God all in all.* So it will be in the Conſummation of all things; when *all things ſhall be ſubdued unto him, that God may be all in all,* 1 *Cor.* 15. 28. This is the Communication of God to the World, Heaven's Bleſſing and Influence; *On Earth Peace, Good-will among Men.* There is no Diſcord in Heaven; no cauſe of Offence there. The Selfiſh and Froward, who are the Diſturbers and Incendiaries, are in a worldly State, are not naturalized to Heaven. But 'tis rational, and to be expected, that there ſhould be Accord here upon Earth among Men, ὧν τὸ πολίτευμα ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, who are *Citizens of Heaven,* account their Names regiſtred there; who look upon themſelves as now belonging to that place, and in due time to come thither. Fellow-Travellers and Countrymen, when abroad, are glad one of another; are faithful and kind each to other. Diſc. XXX. Phil. 3. 20.

2. 'Tis the *Cauſe* of *Religion*, and natural to the Regenerate State. *Jam.* 3. 17. *The Wiſdom which is from above, is firſt pure, and then peaceable, gentle, and eaſie to be entreated, full of Mercy and good Fruits.* If Religion attains not this Effect, it is barren and ineffectual; it is not in Truth, but only pretended: There muſt be inward Compoſure, and outward good Behaviour. The *Pſalmiſt* makes a good Explication of Religion in the Subject, *Pſal.* 131. 1, 2. *My Heart is not haughty, nor mine Eyes lofty; neither do I exerciſe my ſelf in great Matters, or in things too high for me. I behave and quiet my ſelf as a Child. Religion doth bridle Evil Deſires:* Doth ſubdue and moderate the Exorbitances and Unrulineſs of Mens Spirits. The Profane and Irreligious are boiſterous, tempeſtuous within themſelves, are ſtormy and clamorous; are in Darkneſs, Diſorder and נצר דרע *Figmentum malum, concupiſcentiam mali.*

Confuſion; through Paſſion, Inordinacy of Appetite, are ground between contrary Affections, as Corn between Mill-ſtones: Whereas the Work of Religion is to calm and quiet, to content and ſatisfie, to make gentle, and to compoſe the rolling tumbling Mind of Man.

Emollit mores nec ſinit eſſe feros.

If a Man be not far better-natur'd towards God and all the World; more kind and loving to Men; more at Peace within himſelf after his Regeneration than before; there hath been Motion, without a Form introduced; which in Nature is monſtrous and Abortive.

Motus ſine remotu facta.

'Tis a ſcandal to the World, where Profeſſors of Religion do not agree: Either it makes ſtrangers to it call the thing in queſtion, as *Pilate* did, *What is Truth?* who will let all alone till they be agreed: Or elſe they think that they are all *Malæ fidei poſſeſſores*, no Natural Parents, becauſe they are for Diviſion: No Rightful Owners, all Thieves, becauſe of their ſeveral Intereſts and Shares. Truth being ſingle, if Men did meet in Truth they would be united. 'Tis a Sign the Cauſe is not Right and undoubted, when the Maintainers of it do ſo interfere, go ſuch groſs ways to work. This hath tired out the beſt of Men, wearied them out of the World. Good-tempered *Melancton*'s Satisfaction, when he came to die was, that he ſhould be freed from the Temptations to Sin: From the Troubles of the World; and from the Fury of Theologues; from quarelſom Perſons in Matters of Religion; as vexatious and troubleſom as either of the former. 'Twas *Origen*'s Argument againſt *Celſus*, that through the Virtue and Efficacy of the Chriſtian Religion, the State of the *Church* was calm and quiet; whereas other States were turbulent.

A tentatione ad peccatum: ab Ærumnis hujus vitæ: & a rabie Theologorum.

Orig. contra Celſ. L. 3. p. 128, 129.

2 *Cor.* 12. 20. *Leſt when I come, I ſhould not find you ſuch as I would: Leſt there be Debates, Envyings, Wraths, Strifes, Backbitings, Whiſperings, Swellings, Tumults*

Tumults. The Works of the Fleſh are, Hatred, Variance, Emulations, Wrath, Strife, Seditions, Hereſies, Envyings, Murder, Gal. 5. 20. *But the Fruits of the Spirit are, Love, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Meekneſs, Goodneſs.* Diſc. XXX.

3. 'Tis the Converſation of Chriſtians each with other for *mutual Gain and Advantage.* (1.) For Spiritual *Edification.* Whereas if Variance and Conteſts obtain, there will be Alienation of Hearts and Affections, a Suſpenſion of all Chriſtian Acts; there will be neither Prayer nor Diſcourſe: Whereas they who are Religious, they that *fear the Lord, ſhould ſpeak often to one another,* Mal. 3. 26. (2.) This is for their *better Subſiſtence* in an evil World. Foreign Oppoſition and Force cannot do the Miſchief that internal Feuds and Treachery may. (3.) There is more Hearts-eaſe and Quiet of Mind. 'Tis burdenſome to live out of Love and Good-will: The Mind is ſtill contriving Defence or Offence: And ſo not vacant towards the higheſt and nobleſt Objects. *Junctæ Viribus Juvat. Divide, & Impera.*

4. This prevents all *Miſchiefs* which infeſt Humane Society. Such as, (1.) Sideings one againſt another; Part-takings, and Factions. (2.) Falſe Suſpicions, Jealouſies, Heart-burnings. (3.) Plottings, Contrivings, Underminings of each other. (4.) Competitions of Parties, envious Compariſons. There ſhould be but one Diviſion, the *Church* and the *World: Born after the Fleſh, and born after the Spirit.* Thoſe who are united by Religion, ſhould be one in Heart and Affection, to all Iſſues, Intents, Purpoſes of Succour and Supply. *Eccleſia & Mundus,*

The *Objections* againſt this are,

1. *Obj.* But we do *not think alike*, are not of the ſame Opinion.

Anſw. No more are we in *other Matters.* All *Artiſts* differ in their Notions: there are different Opinions in ſeveral Points of *Philoſophy*: the ſeveral

ral Conſtellations in the Heavens have different Influence: What is one Man's Meat, is another's Medicine, and another's Poiſon. We differ in Age, in Stature, in Feature, in Gate, in Complexion, in Inſtitution of *Life*, in Profeſſion. Theſe Varieties and Differences, as well as Harmonies and Proportions, explicate the infinite Wiſdom of the Creator. Yet all, agreeing in Humane Nature, are fit Companions one for another, can take delight in each others Company. Why ſhould not they, who meet in the Regenerate Nature, who agree in the great Articles of Faith, and Principles of good Life; over-look ſubordinate Differences? If there be Love and Good-will, we come to be more Rational, better grounded in our Reſolutions, from our different Apprehenſions. Diſcourſe is as ſoon ended as begun, where all ſay the ſame: whereas he that ſpeaks after, and ſays a new thing, ſearcheth the former; ſo no Truth will be loſt for want of being offered to conſideration.

Pro. 18. 17.

'Tis a *Salvo* amongſt the *Romaniſts*; they may be *Catholicks* who differ, becauſe they ſubmit their Senſe to the Authority of the Church. Our *Salvo* may be, Implicit Faith in God; that we believe in ſuch Senſe as the Holy Ghoſt meant: So we may meet in the Rule of Truth, though we differ in the particular Explication. If there were no Contradiction in the ſeveral Apprehenſions of Men, we might never be awakened to ſearch into things; and ſo, if we were once in a miſtake, we ſhould never come out of it. Thoſe who are Credulous, Preſumptious, Confident, and light of Faith; are taken with all Shews and Appearances, and are never prepared to withſtand Gainſayers.

Obj. 2. But their Errour is *dangerous*.

Anſw. That is *not thy Charge*, but *his*. Thy Work is to propoſe what thou believeſt to be true; together with the Reaſon and Ground of it. To ſay what

what is fit to perſwade, is the utmoſt thou canſt do: And when thou haſt done all thou canſt do, there will remain *that* which muſt be left to God. Diſc. XXX.

2. Since all things that are *neceſſary* to Salvation are delivered plainly in the Holy Scriptures; we may reſolve, that none but thoſe who are groſs Neglecters, do err *dangerouſly*. There is no need of Curioſity ſince the Appearance of Chriſt; no need of Inquiſition ſince the writing of the Goſpel: For now we readily believe, that there is nothing beyond believing. The Points of Chriſtian Faith are as cleary intelligible to all Capacities, as they are clearly neceſſary to be believed by all Men. God accepts alike the Faith that reſults from the dark Miſts of the Ignorant, and from the cleareſt Intelligence of the Learned. The Holy Scriptures are ſo written, that they are ſooner underſtood by an unlearned Man that is pious and modeſt, than by a Philoſopher who is arrogant and proud.

Omnia ad ſalutem neceſſaria per ſticue traduntur in S. Scripturis. Curioſitate non opus eſt poſt Chriſtum Jeſum, nec Inquiſitionis poſt Evangelium: hoc enim libens credimus, quod nihil ultra credere debemus. Tertull.

Obj. 3. But where is then the *Zeal of God*, and for Truth,

Anſw. Zeal for Truth hath its principal Operation on *One's ſelf* in purſuit of Judgment; when, after care of right Information we hold *our ſelves* in Practice exactly to our Judgment; ſo as to *Hold no Truth in Unrighteouſneſs*; nor to *turn the Grace of God into Wantonneſs*: to be, and do, according to what we know.

S. Literæ ita traditæ ſunt, ut citius intelligantur ab Idiota pio & modeſto, quam ab arrogante Philoſopho. Eraſ.

Towards *Others* it ſhews it ſelf in ſtrength of *Argument*; ſeaſonable and renewed *Propoſals*; attractive Recommendation by the effect of a well-governed Spirit, Candour and Chriſtian Patience toward thoſe who are not yet ſatisfied. To be tranſported with irregular and diſproportioned Zeal, is a greater Miſcarriage on thy part, than a ſimple Error in ſmaller Matters is on thy Brother's part.

I ſubjoin two things.

1. That

1. That a high Reſpect is due to *Governours*, *Superiors*, and the *Church* of God, 1 *Cor.* 11. 16.

2. That 'tis of the two ſafer; To err, *Errare communi quam proprio*: To err with the generality, than to err alone. In Modeſty and Humility, we ſhould rather Queſtion our own Opinion; than in ſelf-confidence, be wilful and peremptory.

The *Suggeſtions* following I offer, for Accord, or mutualy Forbearance at leaſt.

1. Why ſhould not *Conſent* in the main be more available to Concord, and Union, than *Difference* in leſs Principal matters, prevail to diſtance and ſeparation? All that are right in the main, are virtually informed by the ſame Spirit. The things they are agreed in, are far more for number: more weighty for importance: The things they differ in are fewer, and of leſs conſequence.

2. Why ſhould Men *Differ* upon occaſion of Religion, which is the greateſt Bond of Union? Religion hath two things *Final* in it, Reconciliation with God: Harmony, Concord, Suitableneſs, Agreement to run through the whole Creation. Religion obliges us to God, and to one another.

3. Why ſhould we be aggrieved, where every one uſeth but his own *Right*? There is none more inherent Right then to worſhip God with our Underſtanding. Every one hath a Right of *Judging*, if he be capable: Yea, can a Man, ought a Man to believe otherwiſe than he ſees cauſe? Is it in a Man's Power to believe as he would, or only as the Reaſon of the thing appears to him? If a Man could believe as he hath a Mind, the Sinner would never be ſelf-condemned; which is the worſt of this World, and of the other.

Non ſubmittens ſine examine utitur Jure ſuo. Tertull.

4. Why doſt thou lay ſo much ſtreſs upon Difference in ſuch points, wherein thou thy ſelf (if Temperate and Sober) art *afraid* peremptorily to *aſſert*. In the ſenſe of thy own Fallibility, ſhort-

ſightedneſs,

ſightedneſs, and the obſcurity of Things, 'tis more becoming, neither to undervalue anothers ſenſe nor to over-value thine own. Diſc. XXX.

5. Why do not I make like *Favourable Interpretation* in behalf of *another*, which ere-while I made for my *ſelf* in like caſe? I erred and expected good Mens Patience. If I am Ignorant, or Miſtaken in any point, I hope God will not impute it to me. 'Twas never more than Finite and Fallible. Why may not that paſs for Weakneſs in another which I account Infirmity in my ſelf, or not worſe?

6. May I not hope to *Aſſwage*, and *Leſſen* that Difference, by fair Debate, which will Increaſe if I keep at a diſtance, giving way to Jealouſy and Suſpicion? There may be ſome Miſapprehenſions in Diſcourſe; but there is more danger of falſe Reports. There is *Gratia Vultus*: The Light of ones Countenance: Preſence is winning; the Perſons of Men Concitiate favour and acceptance: by Diſcourſe Men Accommodate things; in Conference they render a Reaſon. When Perſons at difference talk together, they often find, that they ſtand not at that Diſtance they did Imagine. Diſtance gives Talebearers opportunity and advantage.

7. Is it ſafe to *Reject* him as to Chriſtian Converſe, whom we cannot conclude God hath caſt off from Intereſt in himſelf by Chriſt? At leaſt we cannot ground ſuch an Opinion on *that* wherein we Differ.

8. Why ſhould I think that ſo neceſſary to *another to know*, upon the Belief whereof I dare not lay the ſtreſs of my acceptance with God, nor build my future hopes upon? *Ignorance of that will not deſtroy him, the Knowledge whereof will not ſave me.*

9. Why, ſince I my ſelf came *leiſurely* to Knowledge, do I not hope another may ſee and acknowledge that to Morrow which he ſticks at to Day?

We

We know not what a Day may bring forth. *Days teach Wiſdom* and Experience. Wherefore they who Underſtand not alike to day, may agree to morrow. Therefore the Philoſophers Rule is Rational, *Hate now, as one who may love afterward.* Part to Day upon ſuch Terms, as you may come together to Morrow.

Odi tanquam amaturus.

Again. Why think I not, that *I was taught* of God to teach him? *Luke* 22. 32. *When thou art Converted ſtrengthen thy Brethen.* A Candle is not lighted to be put under a Buſhel. *Eccl.* 4. 9. *Two are better than one, for they have a good reward for their Labour,* v. 10. *If they fall, the one will lift up his Fellow, but wo unto him that is alone, when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up,* v. 11. *Again, if two lye together then they have heat; but how can one be warm alone.* v. 12. *And if one prevail againſt him, two ſhall withſtand him: and a threefold Cord is not eaſily broken. Two are better for Help, for Warmeth and for Strength.*

Again. Why do I imagine that *he* ſhould *always* know, what *I my ſelf*, knew but *lately*? There were ſeveral Hours of hiring the Labourers. He may err long, and yet make as happy an eſcape from his Error and miſtake, as I my ſelf have done.

Again, It may be he hath a *lower place* in the Myſtical Body of *Chriſt.* If he has any, he is not deſpicable, becauſe he is uſeful, 1. *Cor.* 12. 14. *The Body is not one Member, but many: and* 15, 16. *If the Foot ſhall ſay, becauſe I am not the Hand, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body? And if the Ear ſhall ſay, becauſe I am not the Eye, I am not of the Body; is it therefore not of the Body?* Eph. 4. 11, 12. *He gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers; For the perfecting of the Saints, for the Work of the Miniſtry, for the edifying of the Body of Chriſt.*

Again.

Disc. XXX.

Again. Shall I *diſown* that which is *good* in him, becauſe he is not ſuch as I would have him? Who is this that deſpiſeth the day of ſmall things? Shall I reject him for as little, as God Pardons to me?

Again. May there not be as great a difference in the *make* of his Apprehenſions and Faculties, and *mine*, as is betwixt us, in the point wherein we think not altogether alike? If ſo, neither he, nor I can keep it. 'Tis neither of our fault, that our Underſtandings are not caſt into the ſame Mould: or that our Organs or Bodily Conſtitutions, which occaſion Variety, are not alike. It may be alſo, our Apprehenſions are *nearer* than our Expreſſions. Two think they ſay not the ſame, may *think* the ſame as to God. Our Apprehenſions are unavoidably ſhort, and unworthy in reſpect of God: yet God doth not reject our Devotion. God receives of all ſorts and ſizes; Rejects none for weakneſs of Parts, and ſhallowneſs of Underſtanding. Love and Good-will have Power of aſſimulation; work things into a ſuitable Proportion. An abatement and allowance muſt be made for Conſtitution, Complexion, Age, Temper, Education, Temptation, different Natural Inclination. So much at leaſt by a Common Law Rule. Two Men ſpeak together cannot hit it, when a third hearing both, ſhews them that they mean the ſame thing.

Again. Why ſo ventrous to cenſure, and refuſe, where *ones ſelf*, by the ſame reaſon, is ſo much in danger? Our own caſe will not bear much ſeverity. Who knows whereinſoever he hath been, is, or may be miſtaken? Who hath *new* experience of all the Temptations he may come to be in? One may happen to condemn himſelf in another Perſon, as *David* did, 2 *Sam.* 12. 5. If we determine the *minimum ut ſic ſalutis.* What is the the leaſt that is neceſſary to Salvation, we take upon us to make a Law for Heaven.

Aut ſumus, aut fuimus, aut poſſumus eſſe.

Again.

Again. Since I vary ſo much from *my ſelf*, at times, and in caſes; why do I ſeverely examine others by my ſenſe, and hold them to that? *Rom.* 7. 21. *I would do good, but evil is preſent with me.* I will firſt lay out my pains upon my ſelf, to ſubdue all within my ſelf to right Reaſon.

Again. Circumſtances of caſes are to be *ſtated* and ſetled, before a determination for Parting; as, (1.) That ſome Revelation from God in Scripture, or Reaſon of things, *require* it, (2.) Upon what *Terms* we are again to be reconciled, and the Party readmitted, (3.) While we are at a diſtance, *how far* we ſhall go, and no further, (4.) A *reconcileable Diſpoſition* muſt be maintained all the while.

Again. Why *part* from them on *Earth*, whom we may *meet* with all in *Heaven*? What is perfected hereafter, muſt be begun here. Things *here*, are both admitted and preferred upon this account, as moſt ſubſervient and conducive to the affairs of our *future State.* Would it not be ſtrange that two ſhould meet there as one, who could never agree here? 'Twould prove that both, or one of them was grievouſly miſtaken. God, who will not loſe any thing that is Good, will finally ſave what is Capable of Salvation: Will only reject Malign Diſpoſitions which will not be altered, and ſubdued to the Temper of Heaven. *Jerom* and *Ruſinus* charged one another with Hereſie: *Chryſoſtom* and *Epiphanius* refuſed to join in Prayer; the former wiſhing the latter might not return alive, the latter that the former might not dye a Biſhop; both which came to paſs.

'Tis a great miſtake in *Zeal for Truth*, to let it run out in ſome ſmaller matters, which have ſcarce been Thought of by the whole Series of Chriſtians of all Ages, but only of late. Some alledge the *Severity* of ſome of the Ancient Prophets; as *Elijah*

Eliſha

Eliſha, and the *Baptiſt*. But the Diſpenſation wherein ſuch Carriage and Practice was not unuſual from extraordinary Perſons, is now changed into a new one, whoſe diſtinguiſhing Character is Charity. We are carefully to bridle all Motions of diſtempered Heat, the effects whereof are as unjuſtifiable, as it ſelf. *Chriſt* hath made it the Cogniſance of his Diſciples, *to love one another*, *Joh.* 13. 35. Diſc. XXX.

What havock did *Paul* make in his Judaiſm, among *Chriſtians*, upon the account of Zeal? Whereof he found cauſe to be aſhamed all Days of his Life. *Phil.* 3. 6. *Concerning Zeal, perſecuting the Church: Act.* 9. 1. *Saul breathing out Threatnings and Slaughter againſt the Diſciples of the Lord. Act.* 32. 3, 4. *I was zealous towards God, and I perſecuted this way unto the Death. Act.* 26. 11. *Being exceeding mad againſt them, I perſecuted them even unto a ſtrong City?* 1 *Cor.* 15. 9. *I am not worthy to be called an Apoſtle, becauſe I perſecuted the Church of God.* How refractory was St. *Peter* againſt a Viſion to ſend him to *Cornelius*, *a juſt Man, who feared God, and was of good Report among the Jews? Act.* 10. 22. Archbiſhop *Laud* ſays, The Church of *England* is not ſuch a Shrew to her Children, as to deny her Bleſſing, or to denounce Anathema againſt them, if ſome peaceably diſſent in ſome Particulars remoter from the Foundation. If the Church of *Rome*, ſince ſhe grew to her Greatneſs, had not been ſo fierce, had not been ſo particular in determining too many things; and making matters of neceſſary belief, which had gone for many hundred of Years before, only for things of pious Opinion, I perſuade my ſelf, that Chriſtendom had been at happier Peace at this Day, than I doubt we ſhall ever live to ſee it. They have raſhly augmented the materials of Faith; and thereby have weakned, and diminiſhed Charity. This is contrary to the Apo-

Vol. III. ſtolical Practice. *Act.* 15. 10. *Why Tempt ye God to put a Yoke upon the Neck of the Diſciples?* 19. *My ſentence is, that we trouble them not.* 28. *It ſeemed good to the Holy Ghoſt, and to us, to lay upon them no greater Burden than theſe neceſſary things.* 1 *Cor.* 7. 35. *Not that I would caſt a ſnare upon you.*

Two things are *final* in Religion, (1.) To be in Reconcilintion with God: And (2.) To be in Reconciliation one with another: And by St. *John*'s Argument they are not one without the other 1 *Joh.* 4. 20. *If a Man ſay I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Liar.*

In matters of *Philoſophy* there are different Opinions: *Ariſtotelians*, and *Platoniſts*. *Copernicus* for the Earth's Motion againſt the generality. Of late the New Philoſophy. Formerly *Scotiſts*, and *Thomiſts*, in matters of *Divinity*. In our Saviour's time, *Phariſees*, *Sadduces*, and *Eſſeners*. Our Saviour was not ſevere, ſave againſt the *Hypocriſy* of the *Phariſees*.

There are no leſs different Capacities of *Mind*, than Conſtitutions of *Body*: and no leſs difference in Mens outward Circumſtances, than in either of the former.

I intend not by this the *Patronage* of the Refractory and Preſumptuous; but Apology for thoſe who are *Honeſt* in their way, but of weaker parts, and ſlower Apprehenſions; who are therefore of modeſt and teachable Spirits; of whom it may be verified, *Errare poſſum, Hæreticus eſſe nolo.* I may be miſtaken, but I will not be Heretical. Two things a Man may eaſily perceive, whether he be an *Hypocrite*, whether an *Heretick*. Not the former, if he means well; not the latter if he be wilful, but patient to be informed. In all Reaſon it may be ſafeſt for ſuch as have little leiſure to examine; or are leſs competent to judge, through want of Education,

to

to give the more advantage to their *Guides*. I therefore caution *four* things. Diſc. XXIX.

1. Great *Reverence* is to be given to *Superiors*. Government is not to be diſturbed upon Pretence of *private Judgment*: that is to be confined to the Direction of the inferior Man.

2. No *Diſturbance* muſt thence ariſe to the *Church of God*. 1 *Cor.* 11. 16. *If any ſeem to be contentious, we have no ſuch Cuſtom, nor the Churches of God.*

3. Suppoſe the worſt; 'tis ſafer to *Err* in an Error that is *Common*, than in an Error that is Perſonal.

4. It becomes the *Modeſty* of Particular Perſons, where their Sentiments are ſingular, to bethink themſelves better: to aſk themſelves this ſober Queſtion. How went the Spirit of God from the generality of his Worſhippers, and determined it ſelf to me? Which being done, theſe good things will find place; *Caution* and Warineſs: more *Diligence* in Enquiry: Expectation of being further informed. *Theſe* inſtead of conceitedneſs, fondneſs of our own Opinions, ſelf-confidence and peremptorineſs.

If we would do what becomes us, in ſenſe of our liableneſs to be miſtaken; if what is due to the diſcerning of Truth; we ſhould not run away with an Opinion, before we have ſubmitted it to ſevere and impartial Examination by others, and Perſons moſt Competent; and have well weighed what others can ſay: Not till after we our ſelves have thought it again and again; day after day. *We ſhould doubt and deliberate, before we reſolve and determine.* Nothing are we ſo ſure of, as of that which we are ſure of after doubting. Where this is not done, there are eaſie Perſwaſions, Credulity, Rightneſs of Faith: whence it comes to paſs, that Men are greatly poſſeſſed, ſtrangely perſuaded in matters

Nihil tam certum, quam quod poſt Dubium, certum.

where there is very good assurance that things are otherwise. Let therefore the *Modesty* always becoming a Christian Spirit, accompany *private Judgments*: and if you would give *Credit* to it, let good Life and unblamable Conversation attend upon it: Think that thou mayest be mistaken, as well as others.

I have by *Cautions*, bound up *private Judgment* in particular Persons to its *good Behaviour*; so that it neither extend, nor enlarge it self, to the disturbance of Government, or confusion of Order, or other act of Unrulinss in God's Family; which things are in the first place to be resolved on, and secured: For rather a particular Mischief, than a general Inconvenience.

But I wish more were *capable* of the Use of *private Judgment* than there are. 'Tis a Fundamental Right belonging to Intellectual Natures: But to the Exercise of it more is requisite than most Men have to shew: Preparation thereto, by Education, Consideration, and Conference: For we are born only with Powers and Faculties; and so with possibilities of Acts and Habits: We are no-bodies where we have not thought. 'Tis the lamentable Condition of lapsed Mortals, that, of the generality of Men it may be said (through non-use, misuse and abuse of themselves) what God said of the great City of *Nineveh*, *Jon.* 4. 11. wherein are more than an hundred and twenty thousand Persons who cannot discern between the Right Hand and the Left: I say, who, in matters of Reason, Religion, and Conscience, have no Judgment of Right or Wrong, True and False, Good and Evil. And *Man that hath no Understanding may be compared with the Beasts that perish*, *Psal.* 49. 12. He hath not *Honour and Preeminence* above Beasts.

Now, I say, having secured publick Settlement and Peace, those *Suggestions* for Accord, Harmony, and

and Charity, notwithſtanding difference of Apprehenſions in certain Matters, may take place: But I have here no conſideration of *Four* ſorts of Perſons. Diſc. XXX.

1. Not of *Atheiſts*, whoſe Sentiments are forced, and unnatural.

2. Not of *Enthuſiaſts*, who know not to day what they ſhall think to morrow.

3. Not of *Self-flatterers*, who are fondly perſwaded concerning themſelves; and will hardly admit *that* for Evil in themſelves, which paſſes for ſuch otherwhere.

4. Not of *Hypocrites*, who do not mean what they pretend. Truth with them is not an End, but a Means.

But all *fair Allowance* for the *Humble*, *Modeſt*, *Meek* and *Ingenuous*; with great Abatement for their many Diſadvantages, weakneſſes of Parts, want of Leiſure, probable Ignorance: For all which, their honeſt Simplicity, and ſincere meaning make Compenſation. Some think, that if they agree not in all things about Religion, they muſt ſtand at diſtance from one another. But this is a great miſtake: The Text ſaith, *Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the ſame Rule.* And 1 Cor. 13. 7, 8. *Charity never faileth, doth not behave it ſelf unſeemly; beareth all things; endureth all things; hopeth all things*; 1 Pet. 4. 8. *Charity covereth a multitude of Sins*: Both of the Object and of the Subject; of him we have to do with, and alſo of our ſelves: For to the Compaſſionate, God ſhews Compaſſion: And it ſhall be meaſured to us according to our own Meaſures, *Matt.* 7. 1, 2.

FINIS.

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